

# THEOSOPHY, PAST AND FUTURE

*Being the four Convention Lectures delivered in  
Adyar at the Fifty-Fourth Anniversary of the  
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## LECTURE I

# THEOSOPHY, PAST AND FUTURE

• BY ANNIE BESANT

WHEN I was speaking to you at noon to-day in connection with the Presidential Address, I dealt with the Present of the Theosophical Society. I propose to speak to you now about the Past and the Future of the Society. The Past is interesting and is also instructive; but for us the Future is really the more important. We are helped, I think, to consider it wisely by looking back, in order to see what the Society has already accomplished in the world. If we look at the world as it was before 1875 and look at it as it is now in 1929, we shall find certain very salient differences; and, just glancing at them, we may come, I think, to some kind of forecast, by judging whether we have improved that which has gone before; how far there has been an advance in a definite direction; and how far we have drifted, without any very clear idea as to what the Future of the Society is to be.

There is found lately a certain number of people who have been inclined to think that the Society has no longer any particular reason for existence;

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that it had had, indeed, a work to do, but has really done its work; hence there is no particular reason why it should continue to exist. That is one view which you may have seen put forward during late years.

There is no doubt that there are considerable differences in the Society as it was and the Society as it is. Looking back to the early days, we see certain outstanding facts, experienced only by those who are now very old. I suppose a few people are still in the Society who came into it in the very early days. There are still certain documents in connection with the Society, which show you some of the ideas which were current, as to the work that the Society came into existence to do; and these ideas, I think, are not quite the same as those which are widely held by members of the Society to-day.

In the first place, we know that the Objects of the Society, as such, have been changed several times. We need not dwell on this. The subject has been dealt with lately in an article by Mr. Heyting in *The Theosophist*. He has pointed out how many varieties of Objects we have had. We have discussed their alteration several times, and various changes have been made. I am more concerned with what one may call the spirit, the tone, of the Society; how the present spirit or tone differs from the earlier spirit or tone, whether for the better or for the worse.

There was one point which was very strongly stressed in the early days of the Society, and that was its relation to India, in every department, we may say, of India's National Life. We find, for instance, mention of the desire of the Masters that a paper should be started, which was to be called *The Phoenix*, and how very much They desired that the political and social conditions in India should be radically changed. Quite a distinct tone, as it were, was given to the Society in relation not only to the social conditions of India, but also to her political and economic state. Those particular points have been very largely dropped out of sight. It was specially, as far as I can distinguish, the desire of One of the true Founders of the Society—the Master Maurya as He was then, the Chohan Maurya as He is now—that the improvement of the national, the political and the social conditions of India should be worked for by the Theosophical Society, so that India might again become a great Nation. This idea was obviously a larger part of the thought of Those who through their great messenger, H.P.B., were laying the foundations of the Society in the outside world.

You may have heard it said that there was a discussion among some of the Members of the Hierarchy as to whether the Society should be a public or a secret Society. It was decided that it should be a public Society, partly because attempts to form an Occult Society had met with disaster in the past. Consequently, in the various changes

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through which the Objects of the Society have passed, we come at last to those which we have now, that the Society is a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. We use the word "nucleus" in the technical sense in which it is used in biology. Just as the nucleus in the cell of a plant is the centre from which go forth the organizing forces by which the plant is shaped and moulded; so also the Theosophical Society is to act as such a centre, from which the forces that make for Brotherhood should radiate in all directions, and thus bring about a condition in which it could be said, with some amount of truth, that there really existed a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood which, it is hoped, will send its formative forces all over the world.

In some of the outside work which has been done, the Society has played a considerable part. It has worked quite definitely to win recognition of the idea of an Inner Government of the world, the "Power which makes for Righteousness," the Great Hierarchy which ever labours for the good of the world. Among Those specially concerned in that work the Rishi Agastya has played, and still plays, a very prominent part in India. As some of you know, He lives in Southern India; His dwelling-place is known to a limited circle. T. Subba Rao and my brother Leadbeater, for instance, were permitted to visit Him, and met Him in the physical world in the human body He is now wearing. It is quite clear that He takes an active interest in the

elevation of the Indian Nation, and also that He lays particular stress on the subject of Social Reform.

In one direction I had from Him years ago (in 1913), a direction to give a certain series of lectures on the subject of Social Reform. Those were published, as you know, as *Wake Up, India*, a kind of preliminary call to India, to get rid of some of the worst of her social abuses, and so prepare herself for playing a great and influential part in the world. A considerable advance has been made in that direction during the life-time of the Theosophical Society. If you take the condition of India now and compare it with the condition of India as she was, you will find that her position in the world has largely changed. That change has been partly worked by the movements for Social Reform, which lessened some of the worst abuses, although some of them still remain.

Since the Lords of Karma rule Nations as well as men, the fact that we have still among us a large class of people who are called and are born "untouchables," is one of the greatest obstacles to the high position which India ought to hold among the Nations of the world. It is not simply the fact that India has, as other Nations have, unhappily, a large number of poor people, putting the United States of America aside. Looking at the condition of India, comparing it with that of other Nations, we do not find, so far as we know, in any other Nation, the fact that being born in a certain class



makes a person unfit to be touched by his fellowmen born in the same territorial area. The fact that it is so in India is, quite rightly, I think, a hindrance in the way of India's Freedom. So long as she oppresses a certain class of people who are marked out by birth as "untouchable" by their fellow-beings, so long there is no real belief in Universal Brotherhood. The reality of a belief depends on its being practised as a matter of course in daily life. A belief which is simply a theory, looked at occasionally and then put by and forgotten, such a belief is not a true belief at all. Psychologically, belief is the immediate antecedent of action. First comes desire; then thought; taking the desire to indicate the direction of the impulse, taking the thought to indicate the method, the next step is the act. We find that the result of right desire and right thought is a beneficent act. I am not at all sure that the greatest obstacle to India's winning her Freedom is not the shameful fact that India oppresses a very large portion of her population. So long as we are not working to put an end to that oppression, how can we dare to demand Freedom for ourselves, while we deny it to others who are included in the Universal Brotherhood? That is one point which we ought to consider very definitely in our political work.

There is a great movement in India for Freedom. We are not at the moment particularly concerned with any details of the different movements. There

is the movement for Complete Independence, the breaking of the tie with Britain. There is the movement for Dominion Status, which will give Self-Government to India within her own territorial area, but will keep her connected with Britain. The maintenance of India's connection with Britain is a matter on which one or two of the Hierarchy have spoken most distinctly.

Not very long ago I published this in *New India*, and also printed in *The Theosophist* what I have called "my marching orders"; that is to say, a certain order that was given to me with respect to India, which I have carried out ever since. I do not challenge an order given to me by my Master, or by one of His Colleagues. I live to serve Him and to carry out His will. In the statement made directly to myself by the Lord of the World, known to you of course as the eldest of the Four Kumāras, the Lord Sanat Kumāra, you can read what I was told—to "claim India's place among the Nations; be firm but not provocative". I try to avoid being provocative while claiming India's rights, to find that middle path which is between the two extremes. There is the promise shining in front of us: "The end will be a great triumph. Take care that it is not stained by excess." That shows us that we shall succeed, and it warns us also of definite danger.

On the spread of the realization of the ideal of Brotherhood, our attitude towards political questions

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must be based, as much as in any other part of our lives. When we find a distinct statement or direction given by a Master or Masters, then the value of it to each of us must depend on whether he believes in the existence of the Hierarchy or not; and that, remember always, is entirely a matter for your own decision. But it does not, and must not, make any difference in your place in our Society, because in our Society the only condition of admission is that we recognize it as a nucleus of Univeraal Brotherhood. A nucleus is a centre from which forces go out to organize a form. We have the explanatory words: "without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color," but the gist of it lies in the word "nucleus".

Obviously, members of the Society are bound to work against unbrotherly conduct, wherever it is. In India our worst failure is that we are face to face with untouchability, and are not able apparently to get rid of it. Putting it quite baldly, we are failing to recognize that people come into the Society without any questions being asked, and that is quite right. If you profess to accept Universal Brotherhood, you have no right to shut out anyone at all. As a matter of fact, most of our National Societies do not base themselves on Universal Brotherhood, but on the Brotherhood of those who are vouched for as worthy. We have still, I think, in most of our National Societies the practice of requiring two sponsors who pledge themselves that



the person they certify for membership will be a worthy member of the Society. You may think me very immoral if I say that I do not think that worthiness has anything to do with membership of the Society. If the Society is a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, then the unworthy person has as much right to come into it as the worthy can have. We are apt to be remarkably anxious to claim kinship with the Elder Brothers, but do not usually show a similar eagerness to claim it with our younger brothers in the slums or in the prisons. As we hope for help from our Elders, so must we give help to our youngers.

There are a great many movements in which that work can be done. If you are really in earnest and are desirous to come into touch with the Elder Brothers, you must be showing service to those around you. There is one sentence familiar to some of us, that is very striking in this respect. It is that: "The very heart of Our Brotherhood is the selfless service of mankind." If that be the heart of the Brotherhood, of the Hierarchy, it must be a part of our daily duty to offer service everywhere we can. There is one sentence that I have very often quoted to our members when they write letters to me, saying that they have no opportunities of really doing much service, and that is a sentence which came from the Chohan Maurya: "Service in the little things of daily life counts as much with Us as the so-called greater services."

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It is the service in the little things of daily life that makes the habit of service, so that you seize an opportunity for service the moment it offers itself. You grasp it before it has passed away, and train yourself in this way so thoroughly that it becomes practically automatic in your life. You seize the chance of service; you take it at once and think no more of it. To me, that is one of the most valuable thoughts that have come in connection with the Great and Mighty Hierarchy. They are looking out for people who serve in their ordinary lives, and if you want, as many of you do, to come into closer contact with Them, then give yourself up to the service of those around you, and you will prove by your actions that you are of those who will seize greater opportunities as they occur.

Do not wait for big opportunities. They may not come to you, or you may not seize them even when they come. Try to seize opportunities all day long in your daily life. If, for instance, you see a woman with a child in her arms, and another child dragging at her by her sari, and she is endeavouring to carry parcels on her head at the same time, why not offer to carry them for her? If you see a person walking on the road, why should you not stop and pick him up in your motor car? I have done that sometimes, and the person has been so grateful. Try to see what the people round you want, and supply that want. Do not try to force something

on them that you think is good for them. That is not a practical way of realizing Brotherhood.

There are two other movements in the world which profess Universal Brotherhood: Masonry, which makes certain conditions for admission, and the Scout Movement, which is a practical training-ground for our young people, boys and girls. One of the Scout laws is, to "do a good turn every day". Each good turn means a piece of willing service. If one act of willing service is done every day, then it soon becomes a habit, and it will mean many acts of service every day. This is one of the ways in which you may draw the attention of One of the Elder Brothers. He will see in your desire to serve a qualification for coming more closely into touch with Him. I do not mean that you should think of that as the reason for doing service to others. But you will be helping Them in Their work, and They are glad to find helpers. There are so few comparatively who are willing to help in that work of the Brotherhood.

In the past, opportunities for service were in some ways wider than they are now. We have got too much into the way of thinking that the Theosophical Society is served only by propaganda of Theosophical teachings. Living the Theosophical Life is the highest form of propaganda. Everything useful to mankind is part of the duty of the Theosophist when it comes in his way, if he is able to render the service. Do not get the idea that

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Theosophical work consists simply in teaching or writing about Theosophy. Theosophy is Life, much more than lecturing. It is also an attitude to life, the attitude of a person who is eager to give anything he can, and makes service the supreme object of his life.

In the older days, Theosophy seems to have included much more, including the much objected to politics. Of course, my own standpoint is that political work is just as much Theosophical work as any other kind of work called Theosophical—say the reading of a Theosophical book. Perhaps it is more so. But we must not associate the Theosophical Society, as a whole, with any particular line of activity that we take up. It is my duty very specially to do political work connected with India, because I have been told to do that work; but I should be acting wrongly if, while I am doing political work, I should try to induce the Theosophical Society to join any particular political party or any particular line of political activity.

I had one rather curious illustration of the limitations which Brotherhood imposes. I once gave a Charter in the Order of Service for a League against vivisection. A lady who was violently in favour of vivisection wrote and asked for a Charter for a League to promote vivisection. I wrote back a very polite note, saying that I would at once send her the Charter she asked for, if she could show

me that vivisection came within our principle of Universal Brotherhood. I never got any more communications from that lady. It is fairly obvious that we must not torture our younger brothers, in order to make ourselves less liable to diseases, which generally come because we do not obey the ordinary laws of health, and because we lack self-control and the perfect temperance that we should practise, if we want to have a healthy body. If you want to be thoroughly healthy, you need not be an ascetic, but you must consider the body along with the emotions and the mind; both influence the body, therefore you must have right emotions and right thoughts as well, if you want to be healthy, in addition to paying attention to the physical laws of health. Treat the body as a very useful animal that serves you. It is not to rule, but to obey. Do not torture the body, unless you are doing an act of great self-sacrifice for the sake of others. And so we find that in the active side of our Theosophical life, Brotherhood is the one test that we should apply.

Speaking of the method of its application, one thing I have to suggest. I do not think it is wise to start parallel activities to those already existing, and label them with a Theosophical name. If there is an organization called a Peace Society, there is no reason why we should have a special Theosophical Peace Society, because we can go into the ordinary Peace Society and theosophise it. We



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have to try to practise Brotherhood in the organizations we enter into for work.

And considering how much stress has been laid upon that, I would ask you to consider whether we are not leaving the Elder Brothers too much out of our thought in our ordinary daily lives. The relation between the Elder Brothers and ourselves should be a very close and real one, the relation of the younger brothers to the Elder Brothers. Such relationship keeps life serene and happy. Taking things just as they come—knowing that the Elder Brothers are aware of them, and can interfere if They desire—that is one of the conditions of strong, persevering and useful work.

Then we have to learn another lesson, and that is to work hard and keep serene, not caring for the result of our actions. You know some people may say that if you are indifferent to the result of your work, you have not put your heart into it. But we ought to put our heart into the work, and yet be indifferent to the results. Both are possible—to work hard, strenuously and devotedly for a particular piece of work, and to see the whole thing break to pieces and yet not be troubled about it. In order to gain that serenity, I think you need to consider one great teaching, if I may call it by that name, and that is to realize the fact that things in the world do not go by chance, but go according to a Plan.

The Ruler of our world has a Plan given to Him by a Higher Official in our system, like a piece of an

architect's plan given to an overseer, who has to build according to that plan and to do his work perfectly as far as his part is concerned. If we want to work for the Great Plan, we must learn to work without looking for the fruit of our actions. That is the lesson given in the *Bhagavad-Gita*—to work very, very hard and strenuously, and not care for the results. Also in *Light on the Path* it is said: "Kill out ambition. But work as those work who are ambitious." That is exactly what we have to do. If we feel sorry when we fail in a particular piece of work after we have put our best efforts into it, then we have not learnt the lesson of true indifference. We must learn to be serene when our own ideas are smashed. Your outer plan may go; but the force you put into it, your life, your desire to serve, those go on into a better and bigger plan than the plan that was broken up. When you realize that that is true, then you can work without any anxiety at all. You can shrug your shoulders and say: "Well, I'll make a better one."

Personally, the last wrench that I had was in connection with the Central Hindu College at Benares. When that passed out of our hands altogether, though the passing was my own work, and though I had persuaded the Trustees to give it over, still, when it was done, I felt a little sort of emptiness somewhere. Something I cared for very much was gone, and I could do nothing for it hereafter. That

taught me a great lesson. It taught me that I had put something of the personality into my work ; it was not thoroughly unselfish. These are the lessons you learn as you walk along the path of life. As long as you put your personality into your work, as long as you want something from your work, so long your work is not really a pure offering to the Inner Government of the world.

The value of the Society in the Past centres itself, I think, in one tremendous fact. It destroyed materialistic philosophy. You none of you can know the tremendous power that materialistic philosophy had. One discovery of science after another seemed to make it more and more formidable. Tyndall said that we must change our views about spirit and matter, and that " we must see in matter the promise and the potentiality of every form of life ". But twenty years later, you find just the opposite statement made by Sir William Crookes (who was a member of the Theosophical Society). He gave out the statement, with his great authority, that we must radically change our views of Life, and that we must see in Life the moulder and shaper of matter. This is the general view now, that Life is the shaper and moulder of matter, and matter is that which is shaped and moulded. Perhaps that may be one of the reasons why our Krishnaji lays such tremendous stress upon Life. He often says : " Be in love with life." Live with Life ; admire it ; serve it. There is only one Life, and that Life is divine.



Of course, the whole atmosphere changes for us if we realize that ; and I think that the greatest service that the Theosophical Society has rendered to the world in the past is the destruction of materialism as a philosophy of life. That is done, definitely done. Materialism has its place in study, but it cannot solve life's problems. I can remember that Ludwig Buchner told me, that when I went to Berlin, I should not find more than a handful of men of science who believed in religion—a rather sweeping statement. Now all that has passed away. Materialism is not now a philosophy that rules the hearts and lives of men. It was rather significant that a Roman Catholic priest who once came to a Theosophical Lodge, said that we had done one thing, we had destroyed materialism—a curious source for the statement to come from. I should put that as our greatest achievement in the Past.

It is no good to keep on looking at the Past. What about the Future? Some people say that we have done our work, and the Society can go. One of the Elder Brothers said in relation to it, that it is "the corner-stone of the religions of the future". That is the view I put before you to consider, remembering the source from which it came, as the true view, the view by which we ought to shape our activities.

Any member of the Society who does not endeavour to make his life really useful is scarcely, I think, living up to the Theosophical ideal.

Remember that all that is good is within the Divine Wisdom. You remember a favourite text from the Hebrew Scripture, that the Divine Wisdom "mightily and sweetly ordereth all things". Both these ways, the tremendous power and the infinite sweetness in that power, should be characteristic of the true Theosophist in his work. He should not try to force his views upon others; he should not try to dominate.

One very good rule of conduct for those who have strong views and are inclined to force them on others—I was one of these myself—is to be very steady in the assertion of a principle, but very lenient in everything which is not essential. Why should we worry about the unessential? You know how Krishnaji is using that word. It is for you to judge in any line what is essential to your success. Study the people you have to deal with, but follow your own judgment in the method of your work. I do not think, if you will steadily apply yourselves to study your surroundings and judge your own capacities, and if you will remember that in any work for others you must always give your best capacity, you will have very much trouble in finding what is essential in the opportunities that surround you. You may make mistakes, but you will gain experience. You will be gradually developing, if you have the strong desire to serve, that priceless quality called intuition, which is to be the characteristic of the new race, the quality of seeing things

which are not material with the same sensitiveness with which you see an object that is material.

True intuition will always lead you right, but there is a difference between impulse and intuition ; and if you are face to face with a situation where you are not quite sure which voice is speaking, then the best way is not to do the thing at once but wait and see if that feeling lasts ; because if it is intuition it will assert itself over and over again. Intuition is what Krishnaji called "the tyrant". You cannot get rid of it. It does not change ; it lasts. It does not come and go, impermanent. Test yourself by that lasting power, and also whether it is the lower part of you that wants you to act. That lower part does not speak with steady force, but with a passionate urge.

Now life is a complicated thing in many ways. It becomes simple as you go on, if you keep a high ideal, clinging to that till you get a still higher one. If as individuals we could all do that, we might be fairly sure that the Theosophical Society as a whole, being composed of individuals, would do its beneficent work in the world. It is not coming to an end. It has a great future still lying before it.

But I do feel that we need much more recognition of the Elder Brothers, than we now are in the habit of giving. I do not know why speaking about the Masters has become much less usual among us than it used to be. H.P.B. always took Them for granted. You could not remain with her for a

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few hours without her saying something about the Masters. But with very many of us They are put away at the back of our minds, to be called out on some great occasion, instead of being the Light of our daily lives. The constant recognition of the Masters is, I am inclined to think, rather wanting among us. We are so afraid of being thought superstitious, so afraid of the reproach that we try to glorify ourselves. In the presence of the Master, no desire survives except the desire to serve Him. Any is joyful work if it is in His service.

I hope that in the Future of the Theosophical Society, there will be a growing recognition of the part the Elder Brothers play, not only in the great life of the world but in the life of those who believe in Their existence. The value of that existence to us is enormous, if we are able to realize it ; and it is so reasonable a thing, if you think of it, and if you believe in survival after death. How can you explain the fact that one child is born an idiot and another a genius, if you think that there is only one life ? And how can you think that justice rules the world ? The human mind only seeks to make things reasonable, and it seems to me that the teachings of Theosophy are supremely reasonable. They explain the puzzles of life. They throw light into dark places. They make us strong, where we used to be weak.

To me, to give a knowledge of Theosophy is the greatest service you can render to another. I do not

mean that we should force Theosophical teachings on others, but lead them courteously in the direction of that line of thought. I think I have mentioned the fact that Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, who was obliged to go to a great many social functions, used to sit in a corner, perhaps of a ball-room or party of some sort, and think Theosophy, some Theosophical teaching. She told me she always found some one coming to her and asking: "Do you know anything about something which is called Theosophy?" So trust your powers of thought and use them in your work. Scatter Theosophical thoughts round you in the mental atmosphere, as you go about your business in a 'bus or a tram, wherever you may be. Send out something that will be caught up by a brain that is sensitive in that direction; it may give just the link that was wanted.

The Future of the Theosophical Society depends upon those who live the Theosophical life in the Present. Let yourselves be marked out by your readiness for service. Let people turn to you if they want help. Above all, let those who have done wrong confide in you, feeling that they can find in you a helper, a comforter and a guide. In that way, the whole Theosophical Society will become a benediction, if its members will work by living the Life. The more you live the Life, the more you will understand of the treasures of the Divine Wisdom. Christ has said: "He that doeth His Will shall know of the doctrine." It is absolutely true.



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Let us, then, look forward to the future, my brothers. Let us make that future glad with Theosophical light. Sometimes it is very dark in the world round us, but the very test of our strength lies in the fact that in the time of midnight-darkness we still look forward steadily to the dawning of the day. It is easy to believe in the light when the Sun is shining; but to believe in the Sun when it is dark, when the Sun has gone to the other side of the world, is the test of our strength. Make the Sun always present with you, because of your profound belief in the Divine Wisdom; for that is the one thing that will never fail. You will never live in the darkness if that Light of the Divine Wisdom is ever shining in your heart.

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## LECTURE II

# THE TWO PATHS

BY THE RT. REV. C. W. LEADBEATER

I THINK we may take it for granted that we all believe in evolution and the possibility of progress, that we all wish earnestly to grow greater and better, to become nobler and more spiritual. But there are many lines along which that progress may be made, and various methods of attainment are suggested to us.

A few minutes ago a gentleman said to me: "Surely there are *three* great Paths, not two; are you then going to omit one of them from your lecture?" I know quite well what he means, for our revered President some years ago wrote a book called *The Three Paths*, and I suppose my friend was referring to the well-known division into Gñana, Bhakti and Karma Yoga, which explains to us that there are three lines of advancement towards union with the Divine—by Wisdom, Devotion and Action. A Christian hymn-writer has well expressed the same idea:

Three doors there are to the Temple—  
To know, to work, to pray;  
And they who wait at the outer gate  
May enter by either way,

You may say that something of each of these ways is necessary for every student; they are not antagonistic but complementary; so it is not a question of following one or the other exclusively, but rather of inquiring which side of one's nature most needs unfolding at this stage of development; and that is largely a matter of temperament. All the three great qualities which we have just mentioned are required by the perfect man; but which do we need most just now? From one point of view they may be considered as manifestations of the characteristics of the Three Aspects of the Logos—Power, Wisdom and Love; and so they are connected with the three vehicles of man on these lower planes, for the acquirement of knowledge strengthens the mental body, devotion has a tremendous effect on the astral or emotional body, while the planning and execution of definite pieces of work fortifies and invigorates the physical brain. All these qualities have to be brought to maturity, and if possible a reasonable balance should be preserved between them; for if one is greatly in excess, its expression is often mischievous.

Power without wisdom might be wasted, or exercised in all kinds of foolish and erratic ways; while power without love at the back of it might easily degenerate into selfishness of the most serious kind. Wisdom without power would be fruitless; without love it often makes a man cold and hard, so that he does not use it for the benefit of his fellow-creatures.



Love without wisdom leads men into many mistakes, and may easily do more harm than good, as in the case of a mother who loved her baby intensely and, observing that it was cold, administered whisky to it, because she had found it warming herself. On the other hand, love without power is liable to become mere helpless sentimentality—utterly ineffective. So all these qualities are necessary, and must be developed in turn, but at any given moment (or, let us say, in any given life) we shall probably find a man emphasizing only one of them—that upon which he is then specially engaged. For the average man can do *effectively* only one thing at a time.

We can make little sense of the scheme of evolution unless we keep the great idea of reincarnation constantly at the back of our minds. A man may be entirely on the path of Bhakti in this life; but we must not suppose that he will always be exclusively on that line. Successive lives are like classes in a school, and that in two ways. First, there are infant classes, junior classes, senior classes; and the young soul passes from one to another as he grows—from the savage to the half-civilized, and from that to the fully-civilized. But also there are classes for different subjects; just as a boy takes a class at one hour for mathematics, and then at the next hour passes into another to learn geography or drawing, so is a soul born into one race to acquire valour and decision, and into another in

the next life to develop artistic faculty, and so on.

If we trace back the line of incarnations of any person, we shall usually find that he has been born in various countries, obviously to give him the opportunity of unfolding the qualities which he needs. In Europe, at any rate, that seems clear, for there are certain countries which make a speciality of intellectual development, and others which specialize just as definitely along artistic lines ; and the same soul passes from one to the other according to his requirements. That is one way in which the law of evolution works ; but there are other factors which come into play, and one of them is the strong desire of the ego. So we might find two men born into similar surroundings for exactly opposite reasons—one in consequence of his intense longing for them, and the other not because he had yearned for them, but because he knew nothing about them, though they were required for his evolution.

I think that the same rule which we see thus manifesting itself in the case of the three Paths of which our President wrote also holds good with regard to the two Paths upon which I am asked to speak to-day. Something of both of them is required for perfection, or perhaps we should rather say that what is needed is a perfect balance between them—a balance between reason and love, as Krishnaji has put it ; but most of us at the present moment

are earnestly following one or the other—following it so definitely, so one-pointedly that it is difficult for us to be patient with a man who finds it best for his progress to walk on the other.

These two Paths are sometimes called respectively the Occult and the Mystic. This is not a really satisfactory terminology, as we shall see as soon as we attempt to define the words. *Occultus* is a Latin word meaning "hidden", so Occultism is the study of things not generally known or taken into account. In that sense and to that extent surely all we Theosophists are Occultists, for it is of the very essence of the teaching usually called Theosophy that we learn more about the unseen side of life and nature, about God and man and the relation between them, than is known by men who have never felt any interest in such subjects; and having acquired that additional knowledge, we proceed (or we *ought* to proceed) to modify our lives accordingly.

The vast majority of humanity are just living for the physical plane. We cannot blame them for thinking chiefly of it, for—not having studied—they really know nothing of any other, and they have not realized that it is very closely intertwined with an astral plane of emotions and a mental plane of thoughts, and even with still higher possibilities. The ego, living as it does on the higher part of the mental plane, is in close touch with the plane above, from which the deeper knowledge which we call intuition sometimes shines down. It would,

therefore, be foolish for the man, although he is down here in this world to gain experience in a physical body, to ignore the higher planes and their vehicles and their possibilities, if he has ever heard anything about them or had any opportunity of knowing of them.

Very many people do not know anything certainly about the higher worlds, and generally they lay them aside as mere fields for conjecture, which is a very unfortunate attitude. We who are Theosophists should know much better than that. We may or may not have had personal experiences ; that is a matter of much less importance than most people seem to think, for we have (or should have) read and studied sufficiently to know that there is a vast amount of incontrovertible evidence for the existence of the higher planes and vehicles. Many phenomena have been observed which cannot possibly be explained on any other hypothesis than that of the subtler vehicles and the higher worlds, so the evidence is very strong. It is for each man to say whether he accepts the Theosophical ideas. We do not expect people to believe them blindly ; but we do put them forward as hypotheses by which we can account for a great deal in life which cannot otherwise be reasonably explained at all. It is, after all, the same kind of evidence as that which is commonly admitted in various other sciences ; and in that sense it might be said that we are all occultists.

The word mysticism has in its origin a signification very similar to that of occultism—the same idea of the study of secret things; but the modern dictionary definition of a mystic is one who seeks inner direct union with God. One might say, perhaps, that the mystic flies (or at least tries to fly) straight to his mark, like an arrow, taking no account of any intervening stages, while the occultist advances step by step, making sure of his foothold at each stage before attempting the next. The mystic must of course pass through the intermediate stages of development, but he does not think of them; he aims only at the One. There is no reason why the other man, the occultist, should not keep the final goal always in mind; but he does think of the next step that he has to take, and he does think also how far, in taking that, he can help other people along the line which he is himself following.

The consciousness of the mystic is more inward-turned, while the occultist turns more outward. The occultist studies the phenomena around him to a greater extent than the mystic. The mystic ignores all helps that are offered on the way, while the occultist thankfully accepts them. Each path has its advantages, but I think each has its dangers too. The occultist might perhaps concentrate so excessively on his next step as to forget for the time the final goal, and do something inconsistent with its attainment. If he uses some ceremonies, he



might come to take them as a matter of course, and forget the life behind them—though he would be a very poor ceremonialist if he did! He might even be tempted to rely solely upon his rituals, and to think that if they were properly performed nothing else mattered, and interior development would look after itself. On the other hand, he has the advantage of receiving much assistance, and he also has the good karma and the happy experience of doing something for others. “Can one man really help another?” you may ask. Certainly a man can be greatly helped; the advice of another may show him the easiest road, may save him from wasting much time in foolish and futile experiments. No man can take the next step for him; that he must absolutely do for himself; but he can be brought to see what that next step is, and it can be made much easier for him to take it. I myself have been helped on my way by our holy Masters—helped beyond the power of words to tell.

The mystic aims straight, but all his progress is made subjectively, and therefore there is a certain possibility that he may deceive himself. Attainment is to him a matter of *feeling* that he has attained; and some people's feelings are not always permanent or reliable. Another danger for him is that he may forget others, and live in prideful isolation. There is, for example, a type of Indian yogi who constantly strives to become one with Vishnu, often through the medium of a thought-image of some

temple statue of Him. I do not say that such meditation is useless; it may presently bring realization to the yogi, and it even does some good to the world, however indirectly, unintentionally, unconsciously. Such a man is pouring out mental vibrations at a high level, and so doing something to counterbalance the enormous mass or torrent of low, gross and selfish thought with which average humanity is usually flooding the world. His meditation is not barren; of its kind it is high and noble; but it has not the definite intention of doing good to others.

His theory is, presumably, that he should first of all reach the Highest, because when he has attained that, he can act without any fear of mistake; whereas one who tries to act in any way before he has gained that union is always liable to error in his action, and so may do more harm than good. That is undoubtedly true in the abstract, yet we may well ask ourselves which course of action is most useful to the world. It seems to me, for example, that if Madame Blavatsky had chosen to take this mystic line, and had waited until she gained Adeptship before doing anything, there would have been no *Secret Doctrine* and no Theosophical Society. She individually might have attained; but what of all the hundreds of thousands who have been helped by the sacrifice she made in postponing that attainment? What of those whose feet she set upon the Path of Holiness, and those other

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thousands whom those, her disciples, have thereby been enabled to guide from darkness to light?

We all agree that man must eventually reach perfection, but he cannot do it in one leap. He may see his goal in a flash, and make his *resolve* to attain it; he may register a vow to that effect; and that in some of the Christian sects is called "conversion." It is by no means a bad name for it, for *verto* in Latin means "I turn," and *con* means "together with." Up to that point the man has been plunging about wildly, without any particular object but his own pleasure; now he *turns* from that aimlessness, and moves *together with* the current of evolution, the direction of which he now realizes for the first time. In the Buddhist scriptures this important landmark in a man's development is called *manodvaravajjana*, the opening of the doors of the mind. It may, and sometimes does, come upon him instantaneously, like a flash of lightning; but it will usually take him many years (and in some cases many lives) to work up gradually to its full attainment.

Liberation, again, is a relative term, and may be achieved little by little at different stages. For example, we can begin here and now to liberate ourselves from bad habits on the physical plane—irritability, snappishness, gossip, lack of sympathy, and many others. Some of us are bound by our emotions and passions; liberation from them may be obtained, although it often means a long struggle.



Many people are bound by their minds, their prejudices and habits of thought; we may by determined effort free ourselves from those hindrances. Assuredly we should also have in our minds the knowledge that there will some day be a full and final liberation, a union with the Logos; but most of us are still some distance from that; and while we look forward to it and strive for it, we may as well try to be useful to our fellow-men. Even now, in a modified way, at our far lower level, we can realize that that unity exists, for we must remember that God is everywhere and in everything—the lowest as well as the highest; and the knowledge of that at once raises us above all the troubles and worries of life, and gives us an unshakable conviction that all is well.

There are, then, these two paths to the mountain-top, these two methods of the unfolding of the Divine Spirit in man; they always have existed, and I suppose they always will exist. It seems wise to accept that fact, and not to dispute about it or be troubled by it. As I have already said, both lead to the summit; some travel most easily by one road, and some by the other. It does not matter in the least which path we pursue; it *does* matter very much that the man who follows one of them should not condemn or despise his neighbour who follows the other. It is perfectly possible to preach one path enthusiastically without attacking the alternative way; each may pursue and advocate his own

line without blaming those who prefer something different. Surely both types are needed in the world.

Brothers, there is but one Truth, though it has many facets, and there may be many presentations of it. It is obviously impossible that with our limited intellectual power we can fully comprehend the whole of this Truth; it would be ridiculous presumption on our part to suppose that we can grasp it in its entirety; but our lack of comprehension does not for a moment affect the great reality behind. It is quite certain that the destinies of the world are in the hands of an entirely beneficent Power, and that the best that can be done is being done; and that is all that matters. Those great facts behind are the only things of any importance; our belief as to those facts, or our understanding or lack of understanding—all that makes no difference except to ourselves personally. There is not the slightest reason for any of us to feel troubled; all is well, and some day we shall fully understand; some day we shall know, even as now also we are known.

Meantime, let us persevere steadily with any good work that we may have been doing, trying ever to extend it and make it more useful. When we compare those many presentations of the Truth, let us not carp or criticize, let us not commit the folly of trying to set one against another, or to discover differences between them. Let us rather take the nobler attitude of endeavouring to synthesize, to

find the agreement between them, to take them both and make the best of them. That, surely, is the path of wisdom.

We are told that charity never faileth ; let us then never fail in charity ! Two pieces of advice which St. Paul gave long ago to his converts seem to me to be especially appropriate at this time and in this connection : " Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind ", and " Let brotherly love continue."

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LECTURE III

THE GAINING OF SPIRITUAL  
EXPERIENCE

BY RT. REV. J. I. WEDGWOOD

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WHEN the President honoured me with an invitation to deliver one of the T.S. Convention lectures, I chose this subject because of a number of reasons. We are a very mixed assembly here ; there are people of different races, of different nationalities, and of widely differing temperaments. We all cherish as our great ideal the work of the Theosophical Society, though some of us also specialise in various other departments of the one great work. I selected this theme of personal experience because it is one of quite fundamental importance and concern to all of us, each in our particular phase of interest and at our particular stage of evolution. It happens also to be a subject to which I have given a good deal of attention in recent years. And there is yet a third contributory

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reason for the choice of this subject for a lecture ; which is that frankly the Society at the present day stands in a peculiar and special condition.

The Society has not been standing still in recent years. A number of highly important announcements have been made. There has been a great increase in the flow of life through the Society, and this has brought pressure to bear upon the members. There is no need to discuss the situation in detail here. It will suffice to say that this pressure has produced a reaction of scepticism. I am sure that there is only one remedy for this doubt and scepticism, and it is this ; people should work to gain their own spiritual experience and verify for themselves some of those things about which our Theosophical books tell us, and which we have previously perhaps accepted either on faith or as an attractive and reasonable hypothesis. When we are able to reach a measure of such first-hand knowledge for ourselves, then it becomes easier for us to give provisional acceptance to other teachings which still lie perhaps beyond the compass of our attainment.

## WHAT IS SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE ?

We had better begin by considering what we mean by experience and by the word spiritual. I think we may say that when we have had a sufficiency of contact with outside events, with certain



experiences with which the world provides us, then, as a result of that, a marked change of consciousness takes place. That can legitimately be called experience. Everything that happens to us produces some change of consciousness, and every such change of consciousness is in a general sense of the word experience. But we can invest the word experience with a fuller significance, and one prefers to use the word in that deeper sense. When we have had a sufficiency of experience from the play of outer events, the change in consciousness tends to become permanent. We call that experience in the more technical sense. That which was implicit or latent in our consciousness has now become explicit ; it has been brought out into manifestation.

The word spiritual is used, and can quite rightly be used, in a relative sense. Anything which represents higher development for us is for us spiritual.

Words like "spiritual" are too often taken for granted as regards their meaning. The chief reaction they produce is apt to be emotional rather than mental, and people often use such words without ever trying to outline for themselves an explicit mental equivalent of the word. It may help my listeners to gain for themselves a clearer view of what "spiritual" means, if we pause for a moment to examine what is comprehended by the sister word "religion". We can often get illumination upon a subject, if we just take the

trouble to recall the etymology of the word denoting that subject and possibly also of other technical words appertaining to it. What I am saying is curiously true when we come to study the etymology of the word "religion". Religion is generally supposed to be derived from the Latin *religare*, meaning "to bind back".\* Religion can then be defined as that influence in our lives which binds us back to the real or spiritual self, to the Spiritual Intelligence which is Man. I have just been writing a book, if I may be pardoned for making a personal reference, called *The Larger Meaning of Religion*. In it I have developed the view that medicine is part of religion in the larger sense of the word, because it keeps our bodies in a healthy condition, so that they can serve as channels for the transmission of higher powers. Education is part of religion; art is part of religion. These various departments of religion have in the course of time come to be handed over to the secular or civil administration. What is now usually called religion is really a higher department of the work of religion, one which concerns the more special and technical work of religion, which instructs man to unfold his higher powers and helps him in a wonderful manner to do so. It is rather in this sense and at this particular level that I am

\* There is another less probable derivation in *relegere* which in one of its senses means "to sail back over the same waters". This would equally cover my interpretation.

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going to make use of the word spiritual in the sequel of this talk. I am taking the stage at which we as Theosophists stand, the work which lies ahead of us in terms of self development ; and it is this which I am assuming to be spiritual work for us.

### MAN'S PAST DEVELOPMENT

We shall, therefore, deal with the work that lies ahead predominately. But I think we shall be able to envisage the whole scheme of spiritual development in a better perspective, if we just for a moment or two glance back at the previous history of man and the special development through which mankind as a whole has passed. At this earlier stage we are concerned first and foremost with response to outside stimulus. We know from the teachings of modern science that we are surrounded on all sides by forces which are pouring their influences upon us. We speak of them in terms of vibration. We are surrounded and played upon by vibrations of all degrees of rapidity, and our bodies are so specialised that they respond only to small ranges of these vibrations. For example, take the sense of hearing. There are employed in modern organs groups of pipes, each of which groups is called a "stop " or "register". These groups of pipes run in series up the whole compass of the keyboard or pedalboard. These "stops " differ from one another in quality of tone (this being produced by the special

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shaping and other treatment of the pipes). The "stops" differ from one another also in pitch. The lowest note on a large organ sounded on the bottom pedal key is produced from a pipe about 32 feet in length from mouth to top. The note given by such a pipe is two octaves below the lowest C of the keyboard. The highest, played from the top note of a keyboard, is from a pipe measuring half an inch from mouth to top approximately. Some people cannot hear the note of the highest pitched pipes, and above the high pitch just mentioned few can hear sound produced. In the case of the very big pipes of the pedal organ referred to there comes for many listeners a certain point where the limit in sound perception is reached, so far as the fundamental tone or ground note is concerned. What they hear below this point is the series of higher harmonic notes, called sometimes the "upper partials," from which the listener is able to synthesise the ground tone. We respond only to a certain number of the sound vibrations which may be playing upon us, and our experience is limited to that degree of response.

We can apply these ideas to different levels or strata of evolution. If you take the case of the savage, there is little in terms of cultured life to which he can answer. He has to learn the most elementary experiences. He has to struggle for his existence, and he thus gains the most elementary experience. When he has exhausted the possibilities

of savage environment, he comes perhaps into the slums of one of our great cities. Then other possibilities open before him and gradually he rises in the scale of culture and civilisation, acquiring greater facilities of response. Education, the training of the mind, the bringing of knowledge to bear upon a person, is a method of drawing out the inner and latent faculties and of developing them. We observe cases of increased zest for life, which means that the faculties are being drawn out more plentifully, and we use a certain word in connection with the gaining of definite experience, the word "realisation," that is making a thing "real" to us. We come to know of these things definitely in terms of experience. We can trace this gradual growth throughout the whole of humanity.

### SELF-CONSCIOUS PROGRESS

There arrives eventually a very special stage when a person comes perhaps into touch with the Theosophical Society. He can, of course, arrive at some understanding of the purpose of life outside of the Society. But the special contribution of Theosophy is that it explains to us the purpose of life, why we are here, whence we have come, whither we are going. It unfolds before us a great and wonderful scheme of evolution and life, whose scope and reasonableness is elsewhere unequalled. This is all a boon for which we have to be profoundly



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grateful to the Society, for in regard to the whole plan of life it brings for us order out of chaos. We become self-conscious to a certain extent in regard to our life-experience. We understand why we are in the world, why the various events happen to us, the whole theory of experience in life. We know that man is essentially a Divine Being, a spark from the Divine Flame, a germ or seed of Divinity, and that these Divine powers are gradually being brought out from the stage of latency, the germinal stage, into a state of development and manifestation. That takes place through the constant sequence of experiences which life provides for us. Once we understand that, of course, we take up a quite different attitude towards things. Life becomes, so far as we are concerned, a deliberate and purposeful effort. We go out to meet the experiences that come to us, to see what each event has to teach us, what we can gain from each event, and what more of a fundamental and exhaustive character we can derive from the experiences that befall us. So we can use these different events that come to us in any walk of life, and deliberately draw from them the lessons they are designed to teach us; in that way we can work enormously more rapidly and more powerfully at the development of our character. That seems to be the greatest message of Theosophy. We get the same thing, of course, from the study of other people. We are drawn into association with different people, and in relation

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of consciousness with them we gain far-reaching lessons.

### ANTICIPATION FROM WITHIN OF OUTER EXPERIENCE

Up to the present we have been considering those changes of character that are produced by our interaction with happenings in the outer world. Life, as we have seen, is a constant panorama of experience ; event succeeds upon event. Life is forever providing us with episodes ; we go out to meet these and this contact and coping with the outer world leads to constant changes of character. I have stressed this a good deal, because it is really important that we should see and understand quite clearly this process which is so constantly at work, and learn, as I have been pointing out, to react to and deal with it intelligently and with definite realisation of what is actually happening.

I want now to pass on to other aspects of the whole question of development and to deal with certain practices which may be taken up and studied by those who wish to take their evolution intelligently in hand. We are not dependent for our development only upon opportunities for growth which come to us from outside. We can deliberately get to work within the depths of our own consciousness. We can get control of the mechanism of consciousness, and work

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to open up the reaches of consciousness that lie within us. One method of doing this is the practice of what is called meditation. I shall deal with that a little later, and also with another branch of work—the ceremonial method. In the meantime there are one or two interesting points that we can study in connection with the control and the general manipulation of our consciousness.

### THE BLENDING OF CONSCIOUSNESS

One experiment which is very fascinating is that of gaining experience vicariously from other people. One does that by a process of blending of consciousness. There is a great deal to be learned by this process. Much sympathy of outlook, whether in terms of feeling or thought, can be gained by such blending at the astral and mental levels. When you get a little further in spiritual achievement, and can work consciously at the higher mental or buddhic level you can unite yourself with other people and study things quite intimately from their point of view. People use different methods according to their temperament and the system of training they have followed. Using the buddhic faculties you find yourself right in the centre of another person's consciousness, and seeing things from his own larger point of view. Using the faculties of the causal body the experience is rather different. One finds oneself first of all in relationship

of a close and sympathetic nature with another person, but outside of him as it were. Some preliminary process of *rapprochement* is necessary, and one then finds oneself entering into a close community of consciousness. There are different methods of doing these things. Some people naturally take one way, some another. I daresay it has to do with difference of ray and temperament. Second ray people more naturally use the buddhic method. Those belonging to the grouping of the five rays under the Mahachohan more naturally use and develop the faculties of the causal body. One has to learn both methods, but there is perhaps a natural tendency to predominance of the one or the other.

Now in regard to many of these things our members lack initiative. It is not to be expected that without a good deal of hard work people can function at the levels of consciousness I have just been indicating. But a man can begin with the experiences of his own daily life. Most people have in point of fact much more first-hand experience than they are willing to admit.

When people say to one that they have been active members of the T. S. for a great many years, that they have been lecturing and doing meditation, all without result in terms of first-hand experience, one usually takes the liberty of contradicting them flatly. It is very difficult to take note of experiences that grow and accumulate gradually over a period

which may be spread over a number of years. If we could take ourselves as we are now and compare ourselves with what we were when we first came into the Theosophical Society, we should find that in most cases an astonishing change had taken place. It is largely because people do not quite understand what they have to look for in terms of consciousness, that they are so apt to assume that they have not got any such first-hand experience. I want, if I can, to bring this question of first-hand experience down to an ordinary commonplace level.

Let us take, for instance, the question of our relationship to one another. If you picture a person who is not present with you to yourself, and ask yourself what it is exactly that is making itself perceptible to you, you find a number of things. If you ask yourself, how do I identify such and such a person? How do I characterise him? I think we can answer that you do so by his physical appearance to a certain extent, by special features of the face for example, or perhaps by his dress or the tone of his voice. But there is also what is called the personal magnetism which plays a very large part in this process, and which we recognise consciously to a very slight extent as a rule. If you just stop for a moment to analyse any one of your friends and ask what it is that distinguishes that person from others, you will all agree that there is some special influence which radiates from that



person, which stamps him as an individual, which makes its own distinctive impression upon you and upon other people. It is the special and individual characteristic of that person. I think a great many of us get as far as that. We do not go very much further as a rule. We do not carry on the investigation. You may go a little further and ask what it is that characterises that person, what is his particular influence? You are really then engaged in a process of the blending of your consciousness with that of the other person, and if you can learn to do that sufficiently well, you can gain something that you are conscious of, the sense of his love, or strength, or any other quality, whatever it may happen to be. That is the result of a very simple process, and people who work at that could get results with very little effort. People are not sufficiently awake to the possibilities of these things. It does not occur to them to make a little exercise of that sort. Of course, we have to be scrupulously careful about undue inquisitiveness in regard to the character of other people. There is no harm in serious experiments of this sort.

Efforts at the blending of consciousness made in this way may quite easily lead to definite results, and there is a variety of directions in which the attempt may find its outlet.

The most normal result is that already indicated, namely that one finds oneself in a condition of close understanding of the other person. In ordinary

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life a man uses the ordinary faculties at his disposal, and we find that the ordinary person usually sums up another in terms of the content of his own experience. He is apt to attribute to the other motives for action which would naturally inspire himself. As people grow tolerant and large-minded they become less partial in their judgments, but this is the natural consequence of their own experience being augmented and enriched. Fair-minded people, in making judgments, try to place themselves in the position of another and so to understand from what motive or attitude the other has acted. Obviously it is far more effective to be able actually to merge one's consciousness with that of the other man and to be able thus to experience vicariously what motives inspired him, and what was his real outlook upon the situation.

It may interest you if I make here a little digression to say that this power to blend consciousness tends to develop in the case of people who are brought into close and constant relation with one another. Especially does this happen to those of my profession, if I may be pardoned for touching on this special line of work in the Christian Church here—but it illustrates rather well what I am trying to explain. In administering Holy Communion, for example, the priest is often in a state of great spiritual exaltation, and is able to reflect within himself something of that marvellous and transcendent love and understanding which is

the special characteristic of his Lord and Master, the Christ. There comes sometimes at this point a curiously intimate and tender understanding of other people, of their aspirations, their efforts towards nobility of character, their devotion, and also their difficulties and weaknesses. You will perhaps allow me to say how great a privilege it has been to minister to so many of our Indian brethren. Ours is a liberal Church in the true sense of the word. It does not want converts from other churches and religions. It welcomes those who are not members of any Church to its services and even to partake as guests of the Holy Communion. We have had here during the past few days experiences of the wonderful devotion and great power of aspiration of those who have thus been attending our services. It is different in many ways from what happens in the West. There are very developed people there, but there is more mental assertion, which has tended to dull down the very intense spiritual eagerness which is so characteristic of the Indian people. I do not think that I should have come to the true realisation of these things if I had not been able to come into relation with my Indian brothers under these peculiarly intimate conditions.

### SOME OTHER EXPERIENCES

There is another direction in which this blending of consciousness of which I have been speaking may

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find its outlet. The person with whom one is dealing may suddenly appear transformed and show himself under quite another aspect. What may in such cases be happening is that one may be seeing the other in his Egoic aspect. The consciousness then is not working simply within its usual sphere of relationship—the orbit of the ordinary waking consciousness, which comprises the physical body and some expressions through it of emotion, mind and determination. The orbit is enlarged, and one gets a more direct touch with the Ego, the dweller in the body.

This transformation may also represent a glimpse of a past life. There is a special method of coming to this experience, and it is by working with the magnetism that flows from the eyes of people. If you study the look of people's eyes, you notice that often the eyes reflect the outside world and not the inside character of the person at all. The person is concerned with the activities of the outer world rather than with those of the soul. Sometimes, however, one sees that the eyes reflect not outer surroundings but the depths of inner consciousness, and in these cases, if one puts oneself into sympathetic *rapport* with that person, one finds that this magnetic flow carries one to contact with the Egoic consciousness of the causal body. It is not so difficult for those who can do this to see past incarnations of the person concerned. The man seems to get transfigured. There is a change of something, you

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contact the individuality of the person, to which you "hang on," and you can trace back life after life in that way. I mention these things because they are all interesting avenues towards first-hand experience.

By similar blending of consciousness it is possible, given sufficient intensity and concentration of purpose, to come into relation with Nature, with the trees, with the landscape, with rivers and lakes. And there is again another process by which, leaving aside objective and physical focal points, like people and objects of nature, one can make oneself sensitive to the presence of the angels and the company of the dead. You must be very careful. You should not make yourself entirely negative. First send out a feeler, and if you find the result satisfactory then you can put more of your consciousness into the operation, and you can come into relationship with angels and dead people. These are not such difficult experiments as might be supposed, and some success along these lines of work does bring certainty and conviction. But I had better be quite frank and say that the beginner cannot afford to be too sceptical at this particular stage. He is dealing with faculties which are incipient and most delicate as regards their handling. The wisest plan is to keep a certain reserve of healthy scepticism at the back of the mind, and to decide otherwise to go ahead with faith and a completely open mind at the experimenting with



these faculties so as to give the whole experiment a fair chance. The scepticism can be released some months later. The results are as a rule uncertain at the beginning. But as one develops with practice and in experience, it happens that there come changes of consciousness whose reality seems to leave no room for doubt. When this incipient stage is over the hardest and most difficult part of the path is trodden, for the results are much more clear-cut and definite later. It is difficult to explain to persons unacquainted with the subject wherein lies the ground for conviction. It is partly that one can compare notes and even conduct investigations with others. But there is one characteristic, which goes specially with a class of psychism that can be called "intuitive psychism," and which can be described in this way. When a person deliberately uses his imagination—for example when he pictures to himself that a white wall is red, he can arrive at the stage of seeing red in a certain sense, but there comes with this no definite change in the working of his consciousness. If, however, his psychic faculties open and he receives directly an impression from the higher worlds, the test of its reality can, in the case of this particular kind of psychism, be measured by the sudden expansion or opening up of consciousness that takes place. There is a sense of "moreness" which is quite unmistakeable, and which is the more definite, the less to be questioned, the higher the experience and the clearer its transmission.

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Unless this clear-cut change in consciousness takes place, it is well to refuse to pass judgment favourably, or if I may so say, adversely. With growth of experience the power to judge and to decide upon the reality of the thing steadily increases.

In a book written some years ago called "Varieties of Psychism" I pointed out that there are two ways in which psychism can be developed. The one is "from below upwards" and the other "from above downwards". By the former method you gradually enlarge the scope of your sense perception, and as you penetrate into the higher worlds you get experience in terms of a wider super-physical sense-perception, which is objective in its character. The training of these psychic senses requires untold care and perseverance. The other method does not produce results in terms of extended sight or hearing or so much as objective observation, but in terms of direct or intuitive knowledge. It comes more naturally to those who have practised meditation or made themselves thoroughly at home with the use of consciousness in ceremonial along the lines most familiar to us Theosophists.

Usually when one has had the privilege of spending some time in intimate contact with our Leaders one finds that some marked development of consciousness has taken place, and usually along entirely different lines from what one had expected and perhaps wished. Such development

does not as a rule take the phase of a maturing of faculties already in process of development—that can be done by the man himself. What happens much more is the opening up of a new dimension or faculty of consciousness, as it were. It is something quite original and unexpected. If, for example, you begin to bring into the waking consciousness that of the causal body you find to your great astonishment that you can think and hold relation with large numbers of people—literally hundreds—simultaneously. One can test the veridicity of these more advanced powers of consciousness by the sense of reality and utter conviction that they bring with them.

## MEDITATION

The other two methods with which I want to deal are meditation and ceremonial, for they both are practices which make for the gaining of first-hand knowledge. We can pass rapidly over the subject of meditation, for most of you are tolerably familiar with it. Our audience is mainly composed of Indian brothers, whilst among our European representatives we have people of widely differing nationalities. All this complicates the question of discussing methods, inasmuch as people of differing races and national temperaments obviously have differing needs and requirements. The consciousness of the Indian, for instance, is poised in quite another

way from that of the Teutonic race. The special contribution to the world of the first sub-race is that of the higher spiritual consciousness. The first sub-race preserves this for the world. It will be entirely objectivised only in the corresponding seventh sub-race. The Indian does not naturally identify himself with the physical body. When we first read Theosophical literature we are struck to hear that the Indian says naturally that his body is tired or hungry, and we Westerners are told that we ought not to say "I am tired," and so forth, in the way we do. But there is a difference, as I say, in poise of consciousness. The Indian, as far as I can discover, does not naturally identify himself with his body, whereas the European, being plunged deeper down into matter (fourth and fifth sub-races), has his consciousness centred more at the physical level and does identify himself in waking consciousness with this phase of things. Where there is this initial difference in poise of consciousness I suppose that the requirements in meditation will be different.

### CONCENTRATION

There are some problems which arise when one tries to meditate about which it may be useful to speak. The initial difficulty with the European lies with concentration. That is his first and great stumbling block. He finds often that he suffers from a sensation of whirling in the brain, of which

he finds it difficult to rid himself, or else he gets tired or dreamy. The application of a little common sense suffices to explain this. I have personally had a good deal to do with group-meditation. If one asks a group to go into meditation, one finds that many people reach out at once towards the highest ideal that they conceive, and are then troubled that brain restlessness or absence of realisation results. It is not scientific to ignore the whole intermediate territory to be traversed. A man has to realise frankly that he devotes a few minutes in the course of a day to purposeful and deliberate turning inward of the consciousness, whereas for the remainder of the day he is either outward-turned or in vivid contact with the life of the world or else is dreaming or reading other people's books. He cannot hope to succeed all at once. And the preliminary process with which he must occupy himself is one of purification and of getting himself quiet and tranquil. In other words he has to undo and work against the habit of contrary activity in which he indulges otherwise for so much of the day. He should deliberately face the situation, and instead of flying away immediately to the ideal laid down for the meditation, should as a preliminary step apply himself to getting his mechanism into efficient working order.

Apart from this important aspect of the question, he will do well to remember that concentration is the equivalent of interest. If a man is sufficiently



interested in a subject in the course of daily life, he has not the slightest difficulty in concentrating upon it. Concentration arrives quite naturally when one allows the imagination to get to work on the subject presented for meditation and to invest it with a really compelling interest.

### DANGERS OF INTROSPECTION

The man who decides to give much of his attention to meditation will do well to keep constantly in mind one fact. It is by constant reaction with the outer world that a man awakens to self-consciousness, or, shall we say rather, to intelligent appreciation of his position in the world, of his relation to his fellows, of his place in the scheme of things. Meditation may usefully be followed by the attitude of turning out into the world and towards one's fellow men and pouring out upon them the power or high experience in consciousness that has been won. But meditation proper is the turning inward of the consciousness upon that larger consciousness which is within man, and it entails the exploration of uncharted territory to a much greater extent than outward-turned contact with the world. Because of this it has its possible dangers. Experiences in relation to outer things are more common property and can be measured by outside and accepted standards. The imagination is a powerful faculty; it is capable of producing

great and useful creative results, but it can easily run riot (because of this lack of standards) and mislead a person. That is why mysticism, which has to do with the inward-turned attitude of consciousness is a difficult path. Occultism, which has to do with consciousness turned successively both inwards and outwards has safer standards of comparison. The danger of occultism is love of power, that of mysticism self-centredness and self-gratification in regard to emotions and mind.

### CEREMONIAL



I now turn to the concluding subject of this talk—the use of ceremonial in the gaining of spiritual experience. One is faced with difficulty at the outset in discussing this subject, for there are numbers of people who have prejudice against ceremonial. I think that this prejudice can be allocated to two causes. In its more developed phases, such as one finds in connection with religion, ceremony is often complicated, and it escapes the understanding of ordinary people because it sets out to do things and to deal with forces which are beyond their ordinary range of appreciation. The dislike in this case arises from want of understanding. But there is another cause for a rooted dislike which goes much deeper, and which one finds instinctive in many people to a degree of great intensity. Such people, if they

see a Church, or even perhaps some other ceremony being performed, are extraordinarily perturbed, sometimes they feel ill, sometimes they grow unreasonably angry. The explanation of this is not difficult to find. The feeling cannot be so deep without having had some real cause, and usually it is instinctive and puzzling because it originates from previous incarnations. It may perhaps have something to do with experiences of childhood, but most likely it is a heritage from past lives in which so many people (especially people likely to find themselves now in the Theosophical Society) have been persecuted by religious organisations in the past. They have perhaps held liberal ideas or resented the oppression of priest-craft in days of ecclesiastical abuse and tyranny, and have been made to suffer in consequence. Often it is only necessary for people to be helped to understand the cause of this seemingly unreasonable antagonism to ceremonial workings, for them to be loosed from this bondage from the past, or at any rate for them to see that common-sense and reasonableness demand that they should use every effort to be open-minded about the legitimate use of ceremonies in these days of greater freedom and respect for the individual conscience.

#### THE INEVITABLENESS OF CEREMONY

Because of this prejudice and ignorance in regard to ceremonial I propose to ask you to face the whole

question for a few moments quite dispassionately. One constantly meets with people who say that they do not care for ceremonies and intend to do without them. Enthusiastic advocates of the life-side of things say the same about doing without forms. The fact is that in a manifested universe there is a fundamental duality of life and form, of spirit and matter. No life can express itself or be reached and apprehended by people except through some form. Everybody is constrained to be occupying himself with forms until the final stage when manifestation and therefore duality is transcended. There is not a movement of the body but that it is a question of using some form or ceremony. Taking a meal is a most complicated ceremony. The different kinds of food, their preparation and cooking, their setting out on the table, the elaborate scheme of eating, mastication and swallowing of food. If you look at life from that point of view, you realise that throughout the whole of our day we are expressing ourselves in one way or another through form. There is a science of the economical and efficient use of forms, and of their co-relation. This is the science of ceremony. You have got to use ceremony whether you will it or not. And as we are obliged to make use of these forms, it is surely wiser and more sensible to study this whole matter of self-expression and to decide what forms enable us to transmit the life within us most effectively and usefully. An intelligent co-ordination

of forms is a labour-saving device. No body objects to easy communication by means of an automobile on the ground that he prefers to do without forms and ceremonies.

The same principle is at work in regard to the domain of worship. There are ways of using our forces which are labour-saving or which make for great efficiency—to put it in quite plain language, which makes our efforts more useful. I have pointed out in a book of mine already referred to, called *The Larger Meaning of Religion*, that worship has three aspects. It means literally the giving of “worth-ship” to God. And that is its first aspect. We put into effect the natural tendency that there is in us to reach upwards to God, that the partially-manifest Divine Life within us may find union with the great ocean of the Divine Life that is also without us and universal. “It is very meet, right and our bounden duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks” unto God. Secondly, worship or religion (Lat. *religare*=to bind back; the binding back of the separated man to God) is a wonderful and highly developed science for self-purification and self-upliftment, and brings to us first-hand experience of spiritual things. Thirdly, it is a method of bringing out into expression at various levels of our being of high spiritual forces, and of pouring these out over the world for its helping. There is no limit to the good that such work can do.



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Now in the earlier stages of evolution these practices of religion are done by routine or rote, mechanically, without much understanding though often in pious faith. The prayer wheel is an instance of this kind of worship. If one examines the ordinary Church-goer there is often little initiative or reality in what he is doing. The service is done for him by the officiant and choir, and he takes perhaps a general devotional interest in what is taking place. One does not want to exaggerate. There are devoted and entirely sincere people who do express themselves in Church, but there is little of definite instruction in all this kind of work.

In the Church to which I belong, if I may be pardoned for asking attention to this, a more higher standard of worship is held up. Stress is chiefly laid upon the giving of what is right and fitting in the way of spiritual aspiration to God (this replaces in intention the older idea of supplication), less stress is laid upon one's own self-satisfaction or spiritual development (though this latter naturally takes place), and more importance is attached to the sending out of strong and noble influences into the surrounding world for the helping of people at all levels of consciousness that we can encompass.

To carry all this into effect there are three factors to which special attention is given (a) the use of a common liturgy, (b) congregational worship, (c) the Sacraments. The Liturgy is the plan of work. People could express themselves

independently and spontaneously (as indeed they do in certain parts of the services and in certain non-liturgical services), but a properly devised plan common to all not only spells efficiency but also profits by the great strength of co-operative work.

The Liturgy is carefully devised. It works up stage by stage, it gives utterance to emotion and thought that is all planned and conceived beforehand, and it embodies much knowledge of human psychology and the manner in which the higher spiritual forces can be invoked and used. Let us consider for a moment words like "love," "strength," "devotion" which suggest master-ideas in passages of the Liturgy. These in ordinary Church worship evoke ideas and feelings of appreciation in the mind of the congregation. But more can be done than is at all usual. Members can be trained to meditate upon such leading ideas, so as to be able to become themselves at a moment's notice any of these qualities. It is not a matter of thinking *about* these things, but of *being* them. A man can often feel strong affection when his eyes fall on one whom he loves, but it is far more difficult for the ordinary person to feel the same real and living affection in the absence of the person concerned. The ability to initiate, to originate, these virtues from within, and to be able to pour them out comes, however, as the result of due effort and training. Our congregations are encouraged to do this. The Liturgy then gains a new significance. It is, as I said already, the "plan

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of the work." It offers opportunity for the vivid outpouring of these qualities, and not only in terms of the individual but simultaneously of all those present.

I spoke under a third heading of the power of the Sacraments. I have no time to deal with this here, nor is this the occasion to do so. But we have to bear in mind that there are these great channels of spiritual power at work which enormously intensify all our honest and sincere efforts, so that the Christ Himself is with us in what we try to do.

## COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

The last idea I want to leave with you is the possibility of our learning to grow into a new phase of consciousness in this kind of work, which I have here described as collective consciousness. One may consider the great turning point of the spiritual life to be the reaching of the stage when one has at length grown into realisation of the great truth: that other people and the great problems of life are vastly more interesting than we ourselves. In other words, true self-disinterestedness. When we thus learn to be naturally and normally outward-turned (or, if inward-turned, above and beyond all self-centredness) we can touch varieties of experience that are otherwise a closed book. It is possible to know at first-hand of the power of the Logos, and to gain deeper understanding of the stupendous mystery that underlies our world—the Self-Sacrifice

of the Logos. Another result of this attitude of our part is a gradual growth into the realisation of unity with our fellows. And this can enormously be helped if in all the work that we do in ceremony we work not as separate individuals, but quite literally on behalf of the one group of workers, the body-corporate of participants in the ceremony. We speak, we think, we express emotion, as the common expression of all. In this way the result of the ceremony is marvellously intensified. I know of no more rapid method of growth into first-hand experience than this for people who can freely and happily make use of this method.

I venture to leave with you in closing one idea for your encouragement. It is that the understanding of these things and the gaining of spiritual experience are not at all so difficult as one thinks. The difficulty rather is that it does not occur to people how to get to work at things. This kind of work requires much perseverance, but it is so full of interest that it does bring marvellous changes into one's character and one becomes much more useful in the world and in one's relations with other people. The keynote of success is unselfishness. I know of no more effective way of coming into personal intimacy with the great Masters Who guide us to the realisation of our ideals than this attitude of self-disinterestedness and the becoming more interested in the welfare of others.

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LECTURE IV

A YEAR'S TRAVELS IN LATIN  
AMERICA \*

BY C. JINARAJADASA

FIVE centuries ago, Columbus sailed from these shores of Spain to discover India. Thirteen months ago, I, a son of India, travelled to see what kind of people now live in that India which he discovered. My purpose in this lecture is to tell you what I found concerning those peoples—descendants of your race, but having also in their veins something of the blood of Atlantis.

At the outset, I must apologise for using the personal pronoun "I". In my lectures on Theosophy,

\* The English version of a lecture delivered in Spanish in Madrid and Barcelona, Spain, in November, 1929. Later the lecture was delivered in English at the Fifty-fourth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, held at Adyar, Madras, in December, 1929. When the lecture was delivered in Spain, all references to the Catholic Church had to be omitted or "toned down," at the request of my Theosophical friends, as the Dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera was in full operation. No mention of Masonry was possible.



I try to expound, as impersonally as I can, what that great philosophy is ; I deal then with principles and laws which can be enunciated apart from all personality. But in this lecture, as I take you with me from land to land, I must necessarily be personal, if I am to interest you in my impressions. That is the reason why I shall continually be talking of what I saw and of what I thought, in the seventeen countries of Latin America which I visited.

Let me mention those countries in the order I visited them, so that you may believe that I certainly must have seen and noticed a good deal, if I was at all good at observing. I think I may say that, in one respect, I was good at observing, because I was a theosophist and therefore in my attitude a friend wherever I went, and not a critic.

The countries visited were Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, Bolivia, and Peru in South America ; Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala in Central America ; Mexico ; Cuba, Porto Rico and the Republic of Dominica in the Antilles. I was unable to visit Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela. Except in Panama, where I was waiting for a week for a steamer to Costa Rica, I delivered lectures on Theosophy in all the other countries visited.

When I started from London thirteen months ago, I could speak only Italian and French, but I could understand to some extent both Spanish and Portuguese. In Brazil, my lectures were read by a

friend in a Portuguese translation ; with visitors, I replied in Italian in answer to their Portuguese. But in all the Spanish speaking countries, beginning from Uruguay, I myself read my lectures in Spanish (they were translated for me by friends), even though my conversation had to be carried on in Italian. However, thanks to my Italian, I picked up Spanish comparatively quickly, and after six months was able to talk Spanish, though my grammar was faulty. It is faulty still, because I have not had time to study grammar, in the midst of my lectures and travels.

I started on my tour to South America with a misconception which is common in Europe among the Teutonic peoples, that South America is just a country, perhaps about the size of Spain and France combined, but only another country. I found that South America was an immense continent, not of one people, but of many peoples. Certainly only two languages are spoken there, and in Central America, Mexico and in the Antilles ; Portuguese in Brazil, and Spanish in the other countries. (I omit the three Guianas, French, Dutch and British, where I presume those languages are spoken, because the Guianas are negligible in the affairs of South America, so far as cultural influences are concerned.)

But each people in South America has its own marked temperament which differentiates it from its neighbours. The differences are not so marked as those between the Spanish and the French, or

between the English and the Dutch, but there are still differences. The same is true of the Central American republics, even though they are so small.

South America is composed not of one people, but of many peoples. That is the first fact to note clearly. Though they all belong to the Latin stock, being in the main descendants of Spaniards and Portuguese, and lately, of Italians as well, yet in the course of a few generations they have ceased to be Spaniards, Portuguese or Italians, and have become Argentines, Chileans or Brazilians, and so on. This is partly accounted for by the admixture of the blood of the Indians, the descendants of Atlantean peoples.

It is this fact, that new peoples are rising in Latin America, which is of fascinating interest to the theosophist—of far greater interest to him than to the general public. For the theosophist believes that the Aryan race, to which we belong, is originating new offshoots of itself, new variants in the United States of America and in South America. The theosophical scheme states that several great races, called "Root Races," appear in humanity as civilisation advances; each Root Race has some peculiarity in nervous organisation; and it has therefore certain cultural possibilities characteristic of it, lacking in another Root Race. Furthermore, each Root Race, as it grows and expands, differentiates itself into variants, called "Sub-races".

Among the peoples of the world to-day, there are representatives of three Root Races, called by the theosophist Lemurian, Atlantean and Aryan. Very broadly speaking, the Lemurian peoples are black, and have kinky hair, like the negroes; the Atlantean peoples are yellow or red, like the Mongolians and the Red Indians of the Americas, and have straight hair which will not curl; and the Aryan peoples are brown or white, like the Hindus and the Europeans, and have wavy hair or hair with a tendency to curl. There were two other Root Races before the Lemurian Race appeared, but all their descendants have been absorbed by the negro peoples. The theosophical scheme states that the Lemurian Race is the third Root Race, the Atlantean the fourth, and the Aryan the fifth.

This fifth, or Aryan Root Race, has its variants called Sub-races, and the theosophist tabulates them in the order of their appearance as follows: the first Sub-race, the Hindu; the second, the Arab; the third, the Persian; the fourth, the Celtic, whose brilliant representatives were the Greeks and the Romans; and lastly, the Teutonic, to which belong all Teutons, Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians. All the Latin peoples of Europe—Spaniards, Portuguese, French, Italians, Greeks, Roumanians—are Celts, and belong to the Fourth Sub-race.

Let me mention in passing, that the numerical order of appearance does not imply superiority or inferiority. A cultured Hindu of the first

sub-race, or a cultured Spaniard of the fourth, is not less cultured than a cultured Englishman or a German of the fifth of to-day. But each is cultured in a different way, and all their differences are wanted in the Divine Plan which guides evolution.

But the Fifth Sub-race, the Teutonic, is not the end of the series ; there is a Sixth Sub-race, as also a Seventh. The Sixth Sub-race is already appearing in the United States of America, as too in Australia. And though the time for the appearance of the Seventh Sub-race is still centuries ahead, yet already there are signs of its beginning in South America. That is why South America is so interesting to the theosophist ; it is the cradle of the Seventh Sub-race of the Aryan Race.

The first country I visited was Brazil, and though I visited sixteen other countries afterwards, my impression of Brazil is more vivid than that of any other country. It is not because Brazil is larger than any other country in South America ; it is not because Rio de Janeiro is the second, if not the first, most beautiful harbour in the world. It is because there is an exquisite quality in the Brazilian character. The Brazilian of Rio is as polished and as European in attitude as a Parisian ; but he has a quality of friendliness and brotherhood which distinguishes him from all other South Americans, if not from all other peoples. I noted this characteristic in two ways.



First, Brazil as a nation makes a cult of Brotherhood. It has three national holidays of Brotherhood, inscribed in its Constitution. New Year's Day is the day of Universal Brotherhood—Brotherhood among all peoples of the earth; May 13, the day when slavery was abolished in Brazil, is the day of Brotherhood among all Brazilians; July 14, the day that celebrates the liberation of all American peoples, is the day of Brotherhood among the peoples of South, Central and North Americas. It has in addition a Day of the National Flag, November 19, which is of course a day of Brotherhood among Brazilians. As all expeditions of conquest of other peoples are forbidden by the Constitution, the Day of the Flag has no tinge of imperialism. It is a day when the children, dressed in past national costumes, sing and dance the national songs and dances, and commemorate the heroes of the land.

The strange fact is that all this idealism of Brotherhood was put into the Constitution, largely as the result of the work of a small group of Positivists, the followers of Auguste Comte. Two Brazilian positivists, Benjamin Constant and R. Teixeira Mendes, are especially honoured by all Brazil for the idealistic trend which they gave to the Constitution. The result is beautiful, especially in the attitude which the Brazilian has towards the negro.

To explain this, let me first say that I have been in the United States many times, and know what is

the white man's attitude there towards the negro. The negro there may be by law an American citizen, but he remains a "coloured man" always; he is debarred, if not by law, then by threat, from many privileges of the higher culture which the white man may earn. Now, Brazil has a large population of negroes and mulattos; in their poverty, lack of education and of culture, they are probably like the negroes of the Southern States in North America. But they are radically different in Brazil, because they are not kept under any social subjection, and so have more of the dignity of self as a human being.

For the Brazilian does not think of them as negroes, that is to say, as an unassimilable race. He does not forget the difference between himself, the white Brazilian, and the negro. But he looks upon the negro as a younger brother, and as a *Brazilian* who is to be trained to live as a perfect Brazilian. All thought of difference of colour, to the point of implying difference of privilege or responsibility, is absent. The white man's standard of living and of manners is held up before the black man, and the black man tries honestly to live up to it. Never a single crime of lust against white women is held up against the negro, that I could hear of; the crime of rape, terrible though it is, does not more characterise the ignorant negro than the ignorant white.

This certainly is a wonderful achievement; the North Americans affirm it is impossible. In India,

the caste people, whose attitude to the outcaste, or "untouchable" people, is like that of the North American towards the negro, similarly scout the idea of any equality of treatment between the caste and the outcaste peoples. But it has been done in Brazil, and that is why Brazil stands out in my mind among all the peoples. We theosophists have as our First Object "to form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour". I am delighted to note that Brazilians had an intuition of this great ideal before theosophists began their work in Brazil.

This charm of Brotherhood expresses itself in another form in Brazil. If you see two children walking along the street, they will have their arms round each other's necks; if it is a girl and an older woman, it will be the same. The Brazilian instinctively wants to show his affection. There is also one other fact which has stamped Brazil deep in my memory; nowhere else have I seen such beautiful children, not only among the well-to-do Brazilians, but among poor Brazilians as well.

An intermixture of negro and white is slowly taking place in Brazil which would horrify a North American. But in Brazil, the standard of worth is behaviour, not race. No one considers that all civilisation is jeopardised if a white man marries a woman of "colour"; nobody dreams of social ostracism. For the Brazilian is very patriotic, and

immensely proud of the future of his vast country ; to him, therefore, the fact that a man or woman is a good Brazilian outweighs all question of colour. And strange to say, this absorption is not degenerating the race. One does not hear the statement, asserted as a part of God's eternal laws, that when two races blend, a higher and a lower, the offspring invariably show the worst characteristics of both ! On the contrary, the Portuguese character has gained in resistance from the admixture of the Atlantean blood, and in sensibility from the African. Even such a close observer as the late Lord Bryce, a scholar who travelled widely, a statesman who knew men and manners, saw no signs of degeneracy in the white race in Brazil, because of its race blending.\*

South of Brazil is Uruguay, a small country, but one that plays a unique role in South America. She is looked upon by the other countries as the friend of all, and hostile critic of none. I have asked in several countries : " Suppose some day a Congress were to be arranged for a federation of all South America, which place do you think will give the most helpful atmosphere ? " Invariably the answer was, " Uruguay ".

Uruguay impressed me with two facts—first, that there the American dollar is worth less, and so the country is very prosperous ; and secondly, that

\* See the Appendix, at the end, for the remarks of Lord Bryce, and two other writers.

Montevideo—and when one says Montevideo, one says Uruguay—does not talk of her prosperity, but of the fact that she is “a little Athens”. The Montevideans drive you round, and show their beach—the finest I have seen anywhere for bathers—and a number of special parks they have for children, all equipped for games. One of the finest monuments in the city, all in white marble, is that erected to a man who was a schoolmaster, and who as a Minister of Education developed education. That is refreshing, for it is usually the politicians and the generals who get the statues; and the self-sacrificing schoolmaster, who really fashions the good citizen, is not considered great enough as a patriot to merit a statue.

Uruguay is keen on education, and on making experiments to get the best. When I was there, the Minister of Education, who introduced me at my first lecture in the University, told me of a scheme he was going to carry out, which was to remove all the schools from the city to the suburbs, where the children could study and play away from the noise and confusion of the city. Of course, this means that a special fleet of omnibuses would have to collect the children in the morning and return them in the evening—a costly scheme, but this did not matter, provided it meant better results for the children.

Montevideo as a “little Athens,” is naturally against bigotry. In South and Central America,



especially where education is little diffused, the influence of the Catholic Church is strong ; but in Uruguay the current is markedly towards any form of liberal thought. In several of my lectures, I often used the phrase, " The Plan of God " ; my friends told me that Montevideans do not care for an excessive use of the word " God," and that it was preferable to say the " Divine Plan," rather than the " Plan of God ". There is one paper in Montevideo which, whenever the word " Dios " (God) appears in an article, always uses a little " d " ! This surely is going too far.

Let me here mention a fact which first impressed me strongly in Uruguay, but which is characteristic of all Latin America, as I later found. When in Brazil, a few persons had presented me with books and pamphlets which they had written, containing poems and essays. But it was from Uruguay onwards that the avalanche really began. Wherever I went, from Montevideo to Santo Domingo, it was the same. So many had written poems, essays, sketches, dramas, and had had them printed at their own expense ; and as a mark of appreciation of my services in the domain of culture, they presented me with the creations of their imaginations. When I return to India, I shall find one room nearly full to the ceiling with these presents, they were so many !

Of course I have not had time to read them before dispatching them to India. But it was with a deep

sense of pleasure that I received them, not because I was gratified at the recognition of my work, but because the creative instinct is still alive in Latin America. All is fundamentally well with a country when its citizens turn to the arts, even if its foreign exchange is unfavourable for the time. It was with delight that I welcomed everywhere these manifestations of the creative spirit of man in poems, essays, dramas. What if many of them are second rate, and often prompted by mere vanity? At any rate, they show that the Latin peoples are still aware of the message of Greece—that man's role is to create something beautiful in life, something that shall reveal a few gleams of that hidden glory in man which we call the soul.

Quite another note is struck by Argentina in the life of South America. Among the cities of Latin countries, whether in Europe or America, Buenos Aires comes next to Paris in size. Every nation in the world is represented there, and I forget how many newspapers in foreign languages are published there, for its foreign residents. Business development is pronounced in the thought of the people. Two millions of Italians live in Argentina, and their industry is a factor in the progress of the country.

Argentina influences all South America in a profound way; what Buenos Aires thinks gives the lead to the smaller countries, not only of South America, but also of Central America. Buenos Aires has two great papers, *La Nacion* and *La*

*Prensa*, as serious and as heavy as the London *Times*; but just because of that fact, they are reliable in their news, and not rash in their judgments. What these two papers say is carefully read by the editors of newspapers in other countries. These two papers, and *La Critica* and all the others in the city, interviewed me, giving me a most friendly welcome. Thenceforward wherever I went in South and Central America, Mexico and Cuba, I found that the journalists knew all about me, and about the enthusiastic audiences that listened to me in Teatro Cervantes in Buenos Aires.

Argentina is the outspoken champion of the Latin spirit, as opposed to the spirit of the United States. This, added to her financial position, makes her a powerful factor in the life of all Latin America.

Let me mention in passing that Mussolini is not liked in Argentina, nor as a matter of fact in any South or Central American country. I came across this in a curious way. In one of my lectures on the civilisation of India, I mention its two fundamental notes, first Duty, and second, each in his own place with his contribution to the Plan of God; and I mention quite casually that in an interview which I had with Mussolini, I had presented him with my Italian translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, saying that he would find his Fascist ideals of "duty" and "hierarchy" in that book. My friends in Argentina begged me to omit this reference to

Mussolini, which of course I did, as it was not essential to my lecture, and there is nothing to be gained by irritating an audience. Later I understood why Mussolini, who personally to me is a sympathetic character, is not liked in Latin America. All the plazas or garden squares of their cities bear statues to their liberators, and there are still living some who fought for liberty for their land. In such an atmosphere, men have not the least inclination to watch dispassionately Italy's experiment with Fascism, which has already produced better administrative results than we find in many other countries. All the same, it is a form of administration which Latin America does not want, and its opinion on this matter is frank and open.

The audiences which listened to me in Uruguay were enthusiastic. But it was in Buenos Aires that I felt for the first time what I felt in all the other countries afterwards, the urgent craving of the people for Idealism. My presence was an event in the life of the city, because in some way I gave the people a vision. They felt that I was not bringing to them in Argentina a foreign product, the Wisdom of the East, but rather that I revealed to them the Idealism latent in their own characters. They felt at heart one with me, because at heart I was one with them. For there is but one World of Ideals, and whether one journeys towards it from Benares or Buenos Aires little matters, since all come to the same goal. It was in Argentina

that I saw the hunger of the people for ideals—not ideals which can only be contemplated in churches, but ideals which will accompany one in the least little action in life.

And it was there too I saw clearly how that great and powerful organisation, the Roman Catholic Church, was doing nothing for the people in their present need. In South and Central America, I think most, especially the women, would like to remain within the Church, if the Church would let them; but the Church offers no bridge between religion and science, between religion and the arts, between religion and business. And where it enters into politics, its influence is invariably illiberal and retrogressive. Now, in these days of education and of fraternisation between peoples and between cultures, freedom of thought and belief is as necessary for us as the air we breathe. But the Catholic Church lives in past centuries, and not in the present, with the result that every man and woman who obtains a little education starves for an Idealism which the Church does not give. It was because I proclaimed with unbounded enthusiasm that the world of Idealism is all the time very near to us wherever we are, in office or in shop, in school or in playground, that people came in crowds to listen to me.

Chile is Argentina's neighbour, but the mountain range of the Andes separates the two countries. There is in Chile a climate fundamentally different



from that of Argentina. This is due to a cold current of water coming from the Antarctic Circle which sweeps along the Pacific coast up to the tropics. This current reduces the temperature both of the air and the water ; though the sun is hot, the evaporation of the sea is small. All along the Pacific coast, there is much mist and cloudy sky, and except in the far south of Chile, very little rain. The wind sweeps what clouds there are towards the Andes, where much snow falls, but there is little or no rain on the coast.

This cooler temperature of Chile, with less sun, makes the Chilean temperament, I think, more introspective. While the Argentine feels more swiftly with the emotions and thinks less swiftly with the mind, I would say it is exactly the reverse with the Chilean. He is not less enthusiastic than the Argentine, but he is less ready to express it. I noticed that the audiences of Santiago and Valparaiso in Chile saw quickly with their minds points in my lectures which produced no particular effect on the minds of the audiences at Buenos Aires or Rosario in Argentina.

Chile is proud of the fact that there are some Indians in Chile who have never submitted to the white man. These are the Araucanian Indians, who defeated the Spanish invaders many a time. Of course now they are Chileans.

Again and again, in the various countries I visited. I could not help feeling that the Latin American has

failed to see the significance of the Indian who is disappearing as an Indian, either because he is dying out, or because he is being slowly absorbed into the Spanish race. The Indian may be slower in intellect, but his race gives him a quality of resistance. Many call this mere apathy, for an Indian prefers to live and die as he is, rather than change. But all the same, he is adding, I think, to the Seventh Sub-race which is appearing in South America, a quality of perseverance which will balance the vacillating emotionalism of the Latin. One of greatest men of Mexico, her liberator, Benito Juarez, a distinguished lawyer, was a pure Indian.

It is when one passes to Bolivia, Peru and farther north, that for the first time one becomes aware of the shadow of the large hand of the United States hovering over South and Central America. The situation is complicated; for all those countries badly want capital for their development, and the United States is only too willing to invest. Then follow the inevitable consequences—inefficiency and waste on the part of the politicians, and the consequent clamor of the foreign investors for the safe-guarding of their investments. The final result is financial control and intervention, which in some cases proceed to a limit which one cannot differentiate from imperialism. I have lived several years in the United States, and I can state with assurance that the average North American is completely averse to any kind of imperialism. But

equally it is undeniable that his government has done deeds which one cannot but classify as imperialistic.

Witness for instance, the forcing of Nicaragua in 1916 to grant a lease of her territory on the Gulf of Fonseca for a naval base. Now, on this same Gulf of Fonseca lie the territories of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. The sudden appearance of the United States with a naval base in the Gulf cannot but be construed as a menace to the freedom of action of those republics. It is true that the naval base has not yet been begun ; but all the same, the United States is there invisibly, in the Gulf, fully in the midst of the territories of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

Of course the three countries protested, before the newly created Central American Court of International Justice, against this infringement of their sovereign rights. The Court upheld their plea, but the United States refused to accept the adjudication. That of course was a fatal blow to the prestige of the Court, and it was dissolved. I doubt if one in a hundred thousand in the United States knows these facts.

Paraguay and Bolivia are linked in my mind, because I visited them soon after the trouble on their frontiers. Feelings were of course bitter on both sides. Both countries need every peso they can raise for better roads, for more schools and for sanitation ; yet both feel they must spend millions

on the upkeep of their armies. Paraguay seems to need more territory, for now she is the smallest country in South America; Bolivia is three times as large, but then so much of her territory is some three thousand metres, or nine thousand feet, above sea level, in very unproductive land, and so she craves for more land in the tropical belt. I gathered the impression that Paraguay did not want to fight, but was perfectly ready to do so; the Paraguayan has much pride in himself as an excellent fighter, and several other countries in South America seem to think so too.

Bolivia is a great tableland, at a great height above the sea; its principal city, La Paz, has an altitude of 3,665 metres.\* I lectured in Potosí, whose altitude is 4,040 metres†; while lecturing my heart was beating about 110, and I was glad that a stout table was at my side, in case anything should happen. Of course the Bolivians are used to the height.

Both the Paraguayans and the Bolivians gave me a cordial welcome, and I made a special journey to Sucre, the old capital of Bolivia, to deliver six lectures at the University, at the invitation of the rector. It was in La Paz that the Catholic priests openly denounced my lectures; that of course made the theatre I lectured in more crowded than ever. Wherever the priests prohibited the faithful from

\* 12,024 feet.

† 13,329 feet.

attending my lectures, all the journalists became more friendly than ever, and gave long notices of my lectures.

In Bolivia, I felt everywhere a sense of depression in the people, because the country is hemmed in on all sides, and she has no outlet now to the sea. Once Bolivia extended to the Pacific, but Chile defeated Bolivia and took as compensation all the coast land of Bolivia. Of course Bolivia is now suffering from the betrayal of her interests by several generations of corrupt politicians; but she feels all the same that the world in general should do her justice, and give her a corridor to the Pacific, or one to the Atlantic, or both, just because she needs such outlets. Why the world should go out of its way to present Bolivia with corridors is not clear, but that is Bolivia's attitude. One thing is very obvious to me, though it is not yet obvious to the rest of South America, and that is, that there cannot be a condition of stability in South America, which will ensure a state of peace for all, until Bolivia does get a satisfactory corridor. Who is going to make Bolivia the gift of a corridor to the Pacific is a question to which I see no answer, for abstract justice is not the rule of conduct as yet for nations.

Peru stands in my mind for its enthusiastic audiences at Arequipa, Cuzco and Lima. Directly my first lecture was delivered in Lima, two of the newspapers began to publish each day the lecture of the evening before in its entirety; before my visit



was over, a third paper did the same. I had delivered four lectures to audiences that packed the theatre, when on the morning of the fifth and last lecture, the Archbishop of Lima published in all the papers a tirade against Theosophy ; and in this manifesto he launched excommunication on all Catholics attending my lectures. As you can imagine, it was the sensation of the day. That evening the theatre was packed to suffocation, hundreds standing along the gangways right up to the stage. Naturally there were tremendous ovations to me at the beginning and end of the lecture. Then ensued something quite unexpected. The crowd insisted on a public demonstration, and made me walk with them all the way to the hotel—a half a mile away—cheering wildly. So thick was the crowd that several policemen, helped by my friends, had to make a ring round me, to prevent me from being swept off my feet. On arriving at Hotel Bolivar, its great doors had to be closed to keep out the crowd. Even then the demonstration was not over, for two thousand people waited on the square before the hotel until I showed myself to them from a balcony, and acknowledged their last cheers.

Of course all South and Central America, Mexico and Cuba received news of this action of the Archbishop. From then on, naturally the priests became busy, warning their congregations against Theosophy ; but all the newspapers were on my side, and I had all the publicity I needed. As the

Catholic Church is famous for its illiberality, my audiences were eager to know what it was that the Church condemned.

From Peru, I went to Costa Rica, but I had to wait a week in Panama for a connecting steamer. This gave me time to visit the old city of Panama, and also to go to the United States Experimental Station at Summit, on the Canal Zone, to get seeds of plants and trees which would add to the beauty of the Theosophical Headquarters in India. From every country I visited, which had a tropical climate, I have sent seeds to India of everything new which I could find of flowering plants, vegetables, fruits and trees. When I return to this earth in another incarnation, I fully expect to be forgotten in India as a Theosophical lecturer, but to be gratefully remembered as the introducer of agreeable fruits, magnificent trees and beautiful flowers.

In Costa Rica, the Catholic influence is strong. My lectures were in the National Theatre, which was granted free of charge ; but I was asked not to mention the word Theosophy. So whenever the word Theosophy occurred, I substituted the word "Idealism". Personally, I prefer the word Theosophy, which means the Wisdom of God ; however, the word Idealism describes Theosophy well.

In Latin countries, in the old world as in the new, woman's influence, as you are all aware, is negligible, as a factor in public life. But in the countries of Latin America, it is an important factor how deeply

religious or superficially religious is the *wife* of the President of the Republic! Of course all admit that her influence can go but one way, to help the Church; nevertheless I am glad that at least one woman counts in affairs of state, even if she is but the mouthpiece of others!

It was my intention to proceed from Costa Rica directly to Mexico. But there was no steamer for five weeks, and this gave me the opportunity of visiting the Theosophical Lodges of Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. It was in Nicaragua that I felt acutely that violent factor among the Latin American peoples, I mean party politics. Never have I been in a country where party hatred is so bitter as in Nicaragua. The Liberals hate the Conservatives, and are hated as violently in return. The Church is for the Conservatives, and I was informed (by the Liberals of course) that during the last revolution a priest had said from the pulpit, "Better be a criminal than a Liberal". Most of my friends were Liberals; just because of that fact, I arranged to meet a group of leading Conservatives, to find out their point of view. Just now, in Nicaragua, the United States is there, "intervening," with her army and her navy. Of both parties I asked the same question, "Do you not want the North Americans to go?" (They are usually called in Spanish "Yanquis".) Both answered without hesitation, "No!" I then asked the reason why; and the reply was that, if the United States withdrew, the

Liberals now in power would imprison or murder the Conservatives on false charges ; the Liberals said exactly the same thing about the Conservatives. Months after in Yucatan in Mexico, I met the Nicaraguan rebel leader Sandino, and heard from his lips quite another tale concerning both Liberals and Conservatives. I think I may now claim to know fairly well Nicaraguan affairs.

The reason for this bitterness was given to me in Mexico. Referring to the propensity of the Mexican to take up arms to defend his political rights, rather than trust to constitutional means, a Mexican said to me, " You see, a Mexican will far sooner trust an American than a Mexican." That is about the truth in most countries of Latin America ; the foreigner is more trusted than one's own flesh and blood.

There is only one solution to this acute problem. It is the spread of Theosophy. When every little town or village in Nicaragua has a Theosophical Lodge, where the members try to realise the significance of the divine truth, that we are all sons of God, and so at all times brothers, whether we know that fact or not, the whole country will be permeated with a spirit of goodwill, and soon Liberals and Conservatives will discover the beautiful fact that they are Nicaraguans and brothers first, and only after that Liberals or Conservatives.

After Peru, on arriving in a new country, I used to ask, " What are the priests like here ? " In Honduras the reply was, " We are liberal here ;

the bishop's influence does not count for much." Both these statements I found were true. Perhaps one reason is that the Masons are a strong and highly respected body. The President of the Republic is a Mason, and was present at a "tenida blanca"—a "white session," a Masonic gathering with no ceremonies, at which a select public is present; I addressed the Masons and the visitors on the "Ideals of Freemasonry".

After my lecture, "The Gods in chains," the students university paper at Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras, wrote, "If we the seniors are Gods in chains, it is very obvious that this year's freshmen are devils unchained!"

In Guatemala the Catholic influence was sufficiently strong to force the manager of the theatre, where my lectures were to be given, to refuse the theatre at the last moment, after he had given his word and the announcements had been published. In this difficulty, the Grand Master of the Masons of Guatemala came to our rescue, and offered the large and beautiful hall of the Masonic Temple.

In Guatemala, especially in the mountain districts of Quetzaltenango, I saw very handsome Indians with delicately formed noses and without high cheek bones. These Indians weave cloths of very great artistic value, the most beautiful perhaps in all South or Central America.

Let me take the opportunity here of warmly thanking the Masonic Fraternity for the most



valuable help which they gave me everywhere. I am glad to know that they realised that I was not the representative of any cult, but one who was preaching a gospel of Idealism and Consecration—the true spirit indeed of Masonry. In nearly every country, the Freemasons arranged for a “*tenida blanca*,” where I could give my lecture on the “*Ideals of Freemasonry*”. I could point out, as a theosophist, certain mystical aspects of Masonry which are little studied by Masons of to-day; my lecture showed that the true purpose of Masonry is to release, both in man and in the universe, divine forces latent within them, for the helping of Humanity, in exactly the same way as the Catholic priest releases them during the ceremony of the Mass. The true reason to me of the fierce opposition of the Catholic Church to Freemasonry is that both deal with the same mysteries and teach the same truths. The Church will not tolerate rivals. I owe thanks also in several countries to the Rotarians, who not only invited me to address them, but in some cases warmly co-operated with the theosophists in arranging my lectures.

El Salvador is the smallest of the republics, but also the most crowded. She is thriving, and perhaps her prosperity may be due to the fact that political jealousies are slight, and that she considers quite antiquated the idea of revolutions as the only means to change an administration.

The Theosophical Lodges of the republics of Central America, with one Lodge in Colombia, now

form the Central American Theosophical Society; our rules require at least seven Lodges in a country in order to form a National Society. As yet there are not the seven requisite in any one of these countries, but I expect to see in two or three years Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador with National Societies of their own.

Five days in a steamer from Guatemala brought me to Manzanillo in Mexico. And immediately on that Pacific Coast I came on the traces of revolution. Three years ago, the Catholic hierarchy rebelled against the State, and many Catholics in the Pacific states of Mexico took up arms, in many cases with priests as leaders, in one case with a bishop taking the field. When I arrived, an agreement had already been made for the priests to return, but some of the rebels had not yet surrendered. So each train carried an armoured car and an escort.

These Catholics who rebelled were called by a new word—"Cristero". This is the same as "Cristiano"—Christian—but with a sinister significance. These Catholics had as their cry, "Viva Cristo Rey!"—"Long live Christ the King!" I was told that it was with this cry on their lips that they charged and shot down their enemies. Hence the word "Cristero" to distinguish these faithful of the Church from those other Catholics (bad ones, I suppose, in the Church's eyes) who were willing that priests should be like other citizens, with no special privileges as the "men of God".

Can you imagine a Catholic country existing for two and a half years without Mass, without baptism, without priests to perform marriages or bury the dead? That was the case in Mexico, because the priests preferred to leave, rather than to submit to state regulations which had nothing to do with their spiritual functions. The country does not seem to have suffered as a whole, though I do not doubt that thousands felt deeply the absence of religious services. Now that the priests have submitted, and so have been allowed to return, the masses, especially the women, are glad. But not all Mexicans. I was in the state of Tabasco, where all the churches have been turned into schools, each school bearing the designation "Rationalist School," followed by the name of a prominent Rationalist. In that State, an appreciable number of the people are determined that the priests shall never return, and they are ready with guns to back up their threat. I have often wondered, what has the Church done in Mexico, to make so large a number of Mexicans indifferent to it, if not acutely hostile to it.

As you aware, Mexico has often revolutions. In England and in the United States they say jokingly about Mexico and Central America, that when the people there are bored and have nothing exciting to do, they start a revolution by way of a diversion. Of course this is utterly untrue. But there is one element in their revolutionary spirit which Europe cannot understand, but which I

admire; it is that a Mexican is at least ready to sacrifice his life for an idea. Industry and making a fortune are not the only things in life for him. The Mexican peasant goes gaily to war, following his "caudillo," his leader, who represents to him an ideal of national betterment and service. In most cases, I doubt if the leader deserves the peasant's devotion; still, the peasant, even if deluded about his leader, feels something great in life, and that suffering and death are minor matters compared to being true to the dazzling vision before him. As I told the journalists of Mexico, I think the Mexican peasant must have an intuitive sense of Reincarnation—that he is coming back to earth again—for he is so ready to throw away his life, seemingly for nothing!

Cuba is the last country of Latin America to free herself from the Spanish yoke, and her people are still full of the memories of their war of independence—I should say, more accurately, their wars of independence. Directly I landed in Habana, I was conducted by my friends to lay a wreath on the statue of Martí, the apostle and martyr of Cuban independence. It was the same in another place, where in addition the municipal band was present to play the Cuban national hymn.

Cuba is like the other countries I visited; the people are of course Spanish, with a curious soft pronunciation which is at first difficult for the stranger. In Cuba, as also in Mexico, and in Central America, workmen formed a part of my audience.

For the manual worker in those countries is interested in idealistic problems. In Mexico especially, the influence of trades unions is strong. The last President of Mexico, General Calles, has done much to better the condition of the workers.

Evidently Catholic influence is strong in Cuba, for two Habana dailies have a special page edited by a priest, giving religious news. However, the Church does not meddle in politics, at least overtly; and the two papers I referred to published much about my work. In the provincial cities of Cuba, the newspapers were most cordial, because they realised that I had not come to convert anybody, but to awaken enthusiasm for ideals.

Cuba is also notable for a remarkable social experiment. There exist two or three large clubs, like the Centro Asturiano—the Asturian Club—and the Centro Gallego—the Galician Club. The former has twenty thousand members, in all the principal cities. It has in Habana a magnificent building for the Club, and each town also has a Club building. But the Centro Asturiano is not only a club which provides reading and recreation rooms; it also provides for its members, who pay two dollars a month, all necessary medical attention in case of sickness. The Club has very fine hospitals and nursing homes for its members, with special staffs of doctors and nurses. It has also a school for the children of its members.



These clubs have originated a modified kind of Socialism, which is worthy of study ; I believe that along such lines much can be done to provide facilities of well-being for all, without having recourse to the extremes of Communism.

From Cuba it is some five days by steamer to Porto Rico, but I did it in eight hours by aeroplane. The first glimpse of the country from the air reveals the great difference between Porto Rico and the other countries I visited. Under the guidance of the North Americans, the country is highly organised, with scientific agriculture, splendid roads and schemes of irrigation. So far as material organisation is concerned, Porto Rico owes a deep debt of gratitude to the United States for the methods of development introduced, and for the prosperity which those methods have brought.

Within the last few years, the Portoricans have been declared American citizens, and the Stars and Stripes are everywhere. The flag is found very prominent in every school. Of course no Portorican, child, man or woman, feels in the slightest degree anything but "Castellano," or Spanish, either in thought or emotion. All the time I was in Porto Rico, while admiring the excellent organisation of the country, I could not help saying to myself, "What on earth is the United States doing here ?" For the Portoricans have no intention of ever becoming Americans ; their instincts are all with Latin America. It seems to me that the only solution is for the United

States to retire gracefully, giving the Portoricans her blessings, and for the Portoricans, in gratitude for past services rendered, to swear to be the eternal allies of the States.

Porto Rico has most unhappily imitated the United States in one thing—in the way of placarding her parks and roads with bill-boards. I regret to say that one ugly impression which will long remain with me is the sight of the principal plazas, or squares, of her towns made into centres of ugliness, because the stone seats in those plazas bear in large letters advertisements *built into the stone*. Porto Rico is a lovely little country; Roosevelt called it the "American Switzerland". Its hills and fields are beautiful, but its plazas, or city squares, the centres of recreation for its citizens, are now centres of commercialism. So far as their response to Idealism is concerned, nothing could be more whole-hearted; they are like all Latin America in that respect. All the more I regretted deeply their lack of forethought, which has allowed commercialism to spoil the beauty of their cities.

The last country I visited was Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, and I am glad to remember the hundreds of eager faces who listened to me. My first lecture, on Education, was given in the university; its hall was far too small for the hundreds who desired to hear me; happily, the lecture was broadcasted, and a thousand people heard it outside the hall in the square. The other

two lectures were in a theatre to audiences of over a thousand, and this enthusiasm shows how the Dominicans are like the rest of Latin America, in the eagerness with which they respond to any message of Idealism.

Now that I have taken you with me into all these many lands which, with the exception of Brazil, once belonged to Spain, I want to ask you of Spain a question, which I have asked repeatedly, and which no one has as yet answered. How was it that all the sons of Spain in her colonies rebelled against her? Why was Spain so brutal to her "criollo" children, her sons born in her colonies? Why did not the upper classes of Spain, and its statesmen who represented those classes, never realise that the Spaniard in the New World was a Spaniard to admire, and not to crush? Within living memory, it was the same in the treatment of Cuba; it was utter lack of statesmanship, and blunder after blunder. Did Spain lose her dominions because she lacked the colonising instinct of England, or was it as a retribution of Divine Justice for the awful deeds done against the Indians by the Spanish invaders, and by those who came after them? I can assure you that such Indians as exist to-day, like those in Bolivia and the highlands of Peru, have not yet forgotten.

I have described to you Latin America with one purpose, which is to show that over there, in the new world, a new race is springing up, speaking the

Spanish tongue, but soon to be different in temperament from the Latin races of Europe. In what way will it be different? Before I answer, let me read you Ruben Darío's well-known poem on Roosevelt. Darío was a Nicaraguan, but he lived in Argentina and other lands also, and his poem is the answer of Latin America to North America. He describes graphically the forces moulding the new Latin character which is forming, because of the infusion into the Spanish of the old blood of Atlantis.

### TO ROOSEVELT

It is with language of the Bible, or with verse of  
Walt Whitman,

That one must approach thy presence, O  
hunter!

Thou art primitive and modern, simple and  
complicated,

With one part of Washington, and of Nimrod  
four!

Thou art the United States, the future invader  
Of the untutored America that has the blood of  
the Indian,

That still prays to Jesus Christ and speaks the  
Spanish tongue.

Thou art arrogant and forceful, of thy race an  
example;

Thou art cultured, thou art skilful, and thou  
hast no use for Tolstoy;

102 THEOSOPHY, PAST AND FUTURE

And when breaking horses or when massacring  
tigers,  
Thou art an Alexander-Nebuchednezzar.  
(Thou art a "Professor of Energy," as the  
madmen of to-day say.)  
Thy creed is that life is a conflagration, and  
progress an eruption,  
And that where thou placest the bullet, there  
thou placest the future.

NO !

The United States is powerful and mighty,  
When she quakes a deep tremor runs down the  
vertebrae of the Andes.  
When thou declaimest, 'tis as the roar of the  
lion.  
Once Victor Hugo said to Grant : " The stars  
are yours " —  
(But see yonder on the horizon Argentina's sun  
is glowing, the star of Chile rising !)  
" You are rich, you join to the cult of Hercules  
the cult of Mammon."  
And blazing her trail with her easy conquests,  
Liberty raises aloft her torch in New  
York !

But this our America, who gave birth to  
poets  
Since the old days of Netzahualcoyotl,



## A YEAR'S TRAVELS IN LATIN AMERICA 103

Who has guarded the footprints of Grecian  
Bacchus,

Who of old learned to read the Punic alphabet,  
Who consulted the stars, and knew of Atlantis,  
Whose name comes to us resounding from  
Plato,

This our America who from time immemorial  
Lived upon Light and Fire, upon Perfume and  
Love,

America of the great Moctezuma, of the Inca,  
The fragrant America of Christopher Columbus,  
Catholic America, Spanish America,  
The America where once the noble Guatemoc  
answered,

"No, I am not on a bed of roses," \*

This our America which rocks to hurricanes  
and feeds upon love—

Listen, you men of Saxon eyes and souls  
barbarous!—

This America lives, and she dreams, and she  
loves, and is vibrant,

She is the daughter of the Sun!

Take you heed! Long live Spanish America!

Thousands of whelps has the Spanish lion  
bred!

\* Guatemoc was the last Aztec emperor of Mexico. He was captured by the Spaniards and horribly tortured. While being tortured, one asked him, "How are you feeling?" and his reply was "No, I am not on a bed of roses".

Till God Himself, Roosevelt, consecrates thee  
as His gunman and hunter,  
Never shall you hold us in your iron claws.

. . . . .  
And, after all, though ~~you~~ all things are yours,  
One thing you lack, and that is—God !

If to "lack God" is true of the United States, it is not less true of Latin America, in spite of all her many churches. And I do not know that Latin America prays more sincerely to Jesus Christ than they do in North America. But the Latin American does respond more swiftly to Idealism, and is therefore in some ways nearer to God. This God who will help the new race is not the God offered by the Catholic Church to-day.

The new God must be the God within, not the God without who must be prayed to in churches, and on bended knees. It will be a new Jesus Christ who will bring Latin America nearer to God, that Christ indeed whom St. Paul preached when he said, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." It is because I preached the gospel of the God within who dwells in the heart of each man—a gospel which saps at the foundations of ecclesiastical authority—that the Catholic priests charged me with trying to revive Pantheism.

When Latin America discovers the God within who dwells in the heart of man, even in the worst of sinners, when she learns to look into the faces of

her children for the inspiration she needs, then there will arise among her children new religions, new philosophies, new arts and new sciences. A wonderful destiny awaits her, when her many peoples have been moulded by time into one race—sensitive, intuitive, flaming in Idealism, and creating new modes of beauty and goodness and grandeur.

Let me conclude by reading to you the message which I sent to all the theosophists of the countries I visited, as two months ago I left Santo Domingo.

Dear Brothers,

Before I leave these lands, I desire to indicate to you certain impressions which I have gained from the sixteen peoples among whom I have laboured.

In this continent of America, two currents flow, which are represented on the one hand by the countries which speak Spanish and Portuguese, and on the other by the United States of America. We who are theosophists know that each people has to give its especial contribution to the Divine Plan, and that no one single culture is more necessary than another. The civilisations of India and of Greece, on the one side, are not more important in the Divine Plan, than the civilisations of England and the United States on the other. Men born in each nation co-operate with the Divine Plan, by developing the culture of their people.

Now you, who live in the lands where Spanish and Portuguese are spoken, are the representatives in the New World of the old culture of Greece and Rome. I hope you will never renounce this culture, which comes to you from your ancestors of Spain or Portugal, or Italy or France.

I know well how Latin America is feeling the economic pressure of the United States. The North Americans are building the Sixth Sub-race of the Fifth Root Race, the Aryan ; they have their particular work, and as they develop they are giving their contribution, especially of material well-being and of individualism. It is highly necessary that all should accept their gospel of material organisation and development, and of well-being in the home. I am a fervent admirer of the United States, except of that aspect of it which decrees that every business man should advertise his goods, by placing bill-boards everywhere, in the squares and along the roads, thereby robbing us of Nature's beauty in our cities and fields. Now, if you mean to imitate the United States in the expansion of business, I hope you will never forget the special message of the Latin Race, which is, that there is more in life than business. "Man does not live by bread alone" ; man is a soul who ever clamours to manifest himself in artistic creation. You, who are Latin American

theosophists, must in a very especial way preach and intensify the gospel of Beauty, because this creative aspect of the character, which is unfolded by the arts, is very important for the manifestation of the Seventh Sub-race.

I discovered in Porto Rico a fine sonnet by Enrique Torres Rivera which describes graphically the character of the Latin American.

### THE SPANISH AMERICAN RACE

In its "ego," our race is single and triple.  
She is the daughter of capital sins,  
Fashioned by poniards and daggers,  
Amid crashes of hate by brother of brother.  
Her birth is from a sea of blood,  
When Spain's imperial lions fought the condors  
of the Andes.  
Spain endowed her breed with her blood and  
her prejudices,  
With her might, her traditions and her Homeric  
struggles.  
And for this, both in war and in peace,  
Still there roam in America  
Don Juan, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

But you, who are theosophists, must awaken a new aspect in your character which I shall call "Don Theosophist," who will possess the emotional sensibility of Don Juan, the



self-sacrifice of Don Quixote, the worldly wisdom of Sancho, and in addition an Idealism of such a kind as will inspire reforms in the world, till each happening here below becomes a faithful reflection of that beautiful happening which is in the Divine Mind.

All the future of Latin America is in your hands, you who are theosophists. This is the last thought with which I take my leave, thanking you, my Brothers, for the affection with which you have welcomed me.

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That also is my message to you all here in Spain. Seek something more full of Idealism than the negative gospel which you profess to-day, and then you will find that you as a Latin have still a great role to play in the world. Your duty is to keep burning the torch given to you by Greece and Rome; its light proclaims to the Western World that men are more than men, the descendants of the Gods of Olympus, whose heritage is indeed, as the poet sings, "light, fire, perfume and love".

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This concludes my address to the audiences in Spain, concerning my impressions of Latin America. But I desire to say a few words more, here at our Theosophical Convention, to add another impression which I gained.

Just now in the world, that conglomeration of forces which we term "Western civilisation" is

exceedingly powerful. It is producing vast changes in every continent. But such is the nature of that civilisation, that for the moment, it is emphasising the external manifestations of life, rather than the internal. Standardisation, and the economic pressure which results from the idea that one cannot be happy unless one has wealth, are making men more and more of a pattern ; they are becoming wheels in a ruthless machine called " progress ". Unless this terrific speed is minimised, and unless also a truer set of values as to what life is are emphasised, Western civilisation will fail to give its true contribution to the Divine Plan.

Briefly put, it is necessary to counteract the evil effects of Western civilisation by bringing to bear on it other forces. These new forces are of two kinds. One is the message of India, which is that the material world can only be understood in terms of a supersensuous world. What is termed the " subjective " view of life, characteristic of Indian thought, is necessary to Western thought to make it more balanced.

Similarly, Western civilisation needs to be supplemented with a characteristic which is slowly becoming pronounced in Latin America. It is the recognition that the individual must be a *creator*. As poet, dramatist, musician, painter, sculptor, dancer, or as embodying other aspects of art, the individual must transmute life with the creative power of his imagination. This element in life is

equally necessary, with the contribution of India, to enrich European and North American civilisation.

When the ideals which are represented by India, by Western civilisation, and by the young civilisation which is being born in Latin America are blended into one whole, then I think we shall build a magnificent character.

It is for this reason that the Seventh Sub-race, now being born in South and Central America, Mexico and the Antilles, is worthy of our enthusiasm and our benediction. The theosophists of the ten National Societies of Latin America have already pledged themselves to be the guardians of their young civilisation, and therefore I ask of you your appreciation of their endeavours, and your most fraternal wishes for their success.

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## APPENDIX

### (I)

(From *South America*, by James Bryce, New York, 1912.)

#### A

In the mixed race (mestizo or mulatto) the white element seems usually to predominate. I do not state this as a physiological fact. It may or may not be so; nobody seems to have investigated the matter. But it is true as a social fact; that is to say, the mestizo deems himself a white, wishes to be a white, tries to live and think as a white, and is practically recognised by others as a white. This is not equally true of the negro, because he is, physically regarded, further off the white than is the Indian. But in Brazil, when the negro is able to take his stand, so far as education and property go, beside the white, he too thinks and acts like a white man and is so treated.

The facts just stated make it probable that the nations likely to emerge when the process of fusion is complete, perhaps at a very distant date, will be white much more than Indian nations. Blood is only one factor, and not the most important factor, in the making of men. Environment and the influence of the reigning intellectual

type count for more. In the United States the child of the Polish or Rouman or Italian immigrant grows up as an American. He may be a more emotional and impulsive, a more violent or more criminal, a more artistic and sensitive American; but the stamp of the new country is on him. So apparently will it be, so at any rate it has been, with the Indian. Tinged however slightly by the blood of the white race, he will become a Spanish-speaking man of the colonial kind, which differs from the European kind at least as much as an English-speaking North American differs from an Englishman. These mixed nations will, however, stand nearer intellectually and socially, to the South European group of nations than to any other white peoples. (pp. 566-7.)

## B

It [the mixed race of negro and white] is well treated—slavery was seldom harsh among the kindly-natured, easy-going Portuguese—and bears no ill-will to its former masters. Neither do they feel towards it that repulsion which marks the attitude of the whites to the negroes in North America and South Africa. The Brazilian lower class intermarried freely with the black people; the Brazilian middle class intermarries with the mulattoes and quadroons. Brazil is the one country in the world, besides the Portuguese colonies on the east and west coasts of Africa, in which the fusion of the European and African races is proceeding unchecked by law or custom. The doctrines of human equality and human solidarity have here their perfect work. The result is so far satisfactory that there



is little or no class friction. The white man does not lynch or maltreat the negro; indeed, I have never heard of a lynching anywhere in South America except occasionally as a part of a political convulsion. The negro is not accused of insolence, and does not seem to develop any more criminality than naturally belongs to any ignorant population with loose notions of morality and property.

What ultimate effect the intermixture of blood will have in the European element in Brazil, I will not venture to predict. If one may judge from a few remarkable cases, it will not necessarily reduce the intellectual standard. One of the ablest and most refined Brazilians I have known had some colour; and other such cases have been mentioned to me. Assumptions and preconceptions must be eschewed, however plausible they seem. (pp. 479-480.)

## (II)

(From *South America, Past and Present*, by Luis Cincinato Bollo, Retired Director-General of the Civil Registry and Bureau of Demographical Statistics of Uruguay, New York, 1919.)

There is no restriction to the admission of men of all nationalities and the use of passports is unknown.\* Everybody enters and leaves the ports without permission of any kind, provided the individual is not a notorious vagrant or criminal. It is not supposed that the color of the skin imparts either intellectual or moral superiority, neither is it feared that the labor of the foreigner will in any way hurt that of the native, as is the belief of

\* The author describes the pre-war conditions of the entry of immigrants.—C. J.

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the North Americans, Australians and South Africans, who bar the Japanese and the Chinese. Intellectual superiority belongs to him who studies and toils the hardest.

The member of the small negro population that remains in the La Plata, is not only mentally and morally the equal of the average European immigrant, but is far more intelligent than the immigrants who come from certain parts of Russia, the Balkans and other backward countries of the Old world. Some of these poor unfortunates are not only ignorant but almost barbarians, while a large number of the Negroes have been brought up in the homes of cultured people who have given them a thorough education. Nearly all the Negroes of this region can read and write and are unusually refined of manner.

The South Americans have not committed the error that the North Americans did in building a Chinese wall between white and black, in the way of barriers in hotels, barber-shops, etc., and even on railroads where they arrange to have separate ticket-offices for the colored people.

Had the blacks intermarried with the whites it would have taken only a few generations of mulattoes with each new generation lighter-complexioned than the preceding one, for the black coloring to have disappeared as it has in the La Plata, and as it is gradually disappearing in Brazil, the Negro being only a small fraction of the total white population. If the barrier continues, in time there will be 15, 20, 30, 40 million and more men who will have consummate hatred for the rest of their countrymen of another race, and this causes the weakness of nations. (pp. 155-6.)

## (III)

(From *Jungle Paths and Inca Ruins*, by Dr. William Montgomery McGovern, Assistant Curator of South American Ethnology, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, London, 1927.)

I loafed in one of the cafes until I managed to scrape the acquaintance of a rather shabby little English clerk, who proceeded to initiate me into the unofficial side of Para. With him I wandered through the narrow crowded streets to the market-place by the side of the quay, where were gathered queer little craft from up the river, with sails of every colour . . .

To the Brazilian there is no such thing as race. There is only nationality. To the Brazilian an Englishman is an Englishman, and he makes no distinction between a high-faluting Nordic and a Barbado negro. Within the boundaries of Brazil a man is a despised savage as long as he wears no trousers and goes around with a blow-pipe, but as soon as shirt, trousers, and the Portuguese language have been adopted, he becomes not a civilized aborigine, but a Brazilian. After all, colour is only skin deep, and who cares about Mendelian laws?

Strangely enough, in this clime even the Anglo-Saxon becomes affected by this attitude. My young guide himself laboured under a native romance. For months after coming to Brazil he had paid but casual attention to the Portuguese language, but on one of his trading trips far up the river, he had seen a dusky maiden who had won his heart. In order to pay the lady a proper courtship, he had applied himself to linguistic studies, and he was now a fluent linguist—and engaged.

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A tropical romance truly, worthy of the pen of a Loti, but when I, not being a Loti, asked for irrelevant details concerning the lady's race, the only answer was that she was a—Brazilian, and I was unable to discover whether white, black, or brown predominated. (pp. 22-3.)

